WORKERS VANGUARD

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 817

9 January 2004

American Troops Out!

U.S. Imperialists Rape Iraq

Reuters

U.S. "liberators" train tank guns on Shi'ite Muslims demonstrating in Baghdad.

JANUARY 5—The media blitz celebrating the capture of Saddam Hussein could not disguise the fact that the American military occupation of Iraq is not going well for U.S. imperialism. The resistance continues, chalking up losses for the American side every day. The Iraqi people are seething with anger at the strutting U.S. "liberators" who can't even turn the lights back on in Baghdad some nine months after the end of the war. (It took Saddam Hussein all of three months to restore the power grid and services after the first Gulf War in 1991, despite crippling United Nations sanctions.) The only weapons of mass destruction to be found in the region are in the hands of the Pentagon bombers, their British allies and the kill-crazy Zionists.

Meanwhile, back on the "home front," New Yorkers partied in the New Year as military helicopters swooped overhead carrying marksmen with automatic weapons trained on the revelers. Holiday travel was turned to chaos as "intelligence sources" forced the cancellation of flights bearing passengers with "suspicious" (i.e., Arab) names. If U.S. government "intelligence" is often an oxymoron, their latest provocations prove they are just plain morons. Their list of suspected "terrorists" spells Arab names phonetically, leading to the harassment of anyone whose name sounds like anyone else's! One "terror" suspect on a passenger list turned out to be a five-year-old child!

Over the opposition of international pilots unions and foreign governments which argued that shootouts in airplane cabins at 30,000 feet did not make safer skies for passengers, the U.S. insisted that undercover armed marshals be stationed aboard. Some flights have been "escorted" by fighter jets whose only purpose can be to shoot down civilian airliners! In response to the blatantly racist plan to photograph and fingerprint foreigners entering the U.S., Brazil retaliated by fingerprinting every U.S. citizen who entered the country.

America's rulers are in a bit of a pickle over how to try their prize captive, Saddam Hussein. His capture is a potential media coup for Bush's domestic campaign to recapture the White House in the presidential election in November. Yet alive and well, Saddam Hussein poses a potentially huge political embarrassment for the Bush gang even in a highly orchestrated trial only simulating "fairness." Any open court testimony on any charges against Hussein could reveal how fully George Bush Sr., Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (to name but a few) fully backed Hussein and his butchery of the Iraqi left, the workers movement and the Kurds, not to mention the millions of Iranians and Iraqis killed in the senseless Iran-Iraq War in which the U.S. helped to arm and finance Iraq.

It will take some fancy footwork to try Hussein for the poison gas attacks which killed up to 5,000 Kurdish villagers in Halabja in 1988 without revealing the response of the imperialists who posture today as the saviors of the Iraqi people. Bush Sr. extended $1.2 billion in credits to Hussein and Britain granted another $500 million after the Halabja atrocity. As we stated last issue, "When workers tribunals of a victorious socialist revolution in the United States try America's capitalist exploiters for their crimes against the oppressed masses of the world, black America, labor, immigrants and the poor, and when Iraqi Kurds, leftists and workers rip the oil wealth out of the hands of the military occupiers and judge them and their former henchmen, *then* we can start talking about justice."

A high-profile trial means that Washington's former ally, Saddam Hussein, will be spared the abuse and torture meted out to less famous captives rotting in the U.S. concentration camp in Guantánamo and in prison camps throughout Iraq. A lawyer for two Australian prisoners at Guantánamo was the first civilian lawyer allowed to meet any of the prisoners and described the camp as "a legal and moral black hole." Prisoners have been tethered to stakes, forced to kneel in the blazing sun for hours, while guards fire rubber bullets at them. Some 32 prisoners have attempted suicide in the past 18 months. Back in Iraq, children and the elderly are rounded up in huge prison compounds, such as in Umm Qasr where approximately 10,000 are held. Two Palestinian students who were held for two months described their ordeal in a *Nation* (22 December 2003) article titled, "Guilty of Being a Palestinian in Iraq": "For the first seven days we were given no food or water.... All the time they were pointing their guns at us. They made us feel that we are going to die now, they gonna kill us now." Before being released, the two students were compelled to sign a document stating that "the U.S. military bore no responsibility for what had happened to them while they were in custody."

Yet, to be out of jail and "free" in occupied Iraq is also to suffer a terrifying daily gauntlet of privation and provocation. Iraq's Labor Ministry has estimated that as much as *70 percent* of the workforce is unemployed. The capital city is blacked out *16 hours a day* and the lights are no brighter elsewhere in the country. To the lack of electrical power and potable water, add the absence of phone lines, the broken sewer lines, the schools reduced to rubble, the uncollected garbage, the

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Edward Said
Passionate Advocate of Palestinian Freedom, Human Dignity

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Federal Court Rules Against Ashcroft, Bush on Padilla

On December 18, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ruled, by a two-to-one vote, that the federal government could not legally detain American citizen Jose Padilla as an "enemy combatant." Padilla was arrested on 8 May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare airport on a "material witness" warrant based on his alleged associations with Al Qaeda. But after a month the Feds declared Padilla an "enemy combatant" with fantasies of exploding a "dirty bomb." They sent him to a military brig, where he has been held without any charges being filed, with no prospect of a hearing or trial, and without even access to a lawyer. The Court of Appeals ordered Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to release Padilla from military custody within 30 days, noting that Padilla is "entitled to the constitutional protections extended to other citizens."

The Padilla ruling joins a growing list of judicial decisions that have called into question some of the more egregious aspects of the Bush administration's drive to fortify an imperial presidency and shred the Bill of Rights. The same day as the Padilla ruling, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California issued an order allowing access to attorneys for the more than 600 detainees held as "enemy combatants" at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The court also ruled that the detainees' indefinite imprisonment without any hearing was unlawful. Declaring that its duty is "to prevent the Executive Branch from running roughshod over the rights of citizens and aliens alike," the court ruled that the law was unconstitutional because it would ensnare anyone who did anything from donating to an orphanage run by a banned group to buying "cookies from a bake sale." Two weeks earlier, on December 3, the court overturned the part of Clinton's 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act that made it a felony to provide "material support" to groups designated as "terrorist." With support for the government's attack on civil liberties eroding (including among some bourgeois circles), Attorney General John Ashcroft's Justice Department was also forced to let Yasser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen apprehended in Afghanistan and declared an "enemy combatant," meet with an attorney for the first time, in anticipation of a Supreme Court appeal.

Univision

Jose Padilla with relatives. He has been held incommunicado for 19 months.

We welcome the Padilla ruling and the other legal setbacks to the administration's attacks on civil liberties in the name of the bipartisan "war on terror." However, the recent court rulings against the government are partial and reversible, with the government making clear its intention to appeal them to the Supreme Court. Moreover, the Court of Appeals went out of its way to assure the Bush administration that Padilla could be handed over to civilian authorities for prosecution on criminal charges or held in a civilian prison under the same "material witness" pretext on which he was originally arrested. The court went on to counsel Bush that "he can ask Congress—which has shown its responsiveness—to authorize additional powers," leaving open the possibility that the government could detain citizens as "enemies" and disappear them, as long as Congress says it's okay. These rulings essentially reaffirm the constitutional separation of powers between the judiciary, executive and legislative branches. The rulings indicate that some of these "war on terror" measures—especially those that eviscerated the role of the courts—have eroded the standard division of labor within the capitalist state and angered the courts.

With Ashcroft's proposed Patriot Act II, the White House would have unchallengeable authority to strip citizenship from Americans providing "material support" to "terrorism." The Democrats have largely supported the administration's military adventures abroad and evisceration of constitutional rights at home, including the USA-Patriot Act which radically curtailed due process rights for immigrants accused in "terror" cases. These legal measures represent a qualitative diminution of democratic rights, but they are the fruit of decades of attempts to increase the repressive apparatus of the state. Just as the Clinton administration

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Lenin on Imperialism

TROTSKY

LENIN

Various liberals and pacifists promote the notion that organizations like the United Nations, by bringing together the countries of the world, including the imperialist powers, could be forces for peace. In the early 20th century, the social democrat Karl Kautsky similarly maintained that the imperialist powers could establish a stable and peaceful division of the world economy. But as Lenin explained in Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, *written amid the carnage of the first interimperialist world war, without socialist revolution to sweep away the system of capitalism, imperialist rivalries inevitably lead to imperialist wars.*

Let us consider India, Indo-China and China. It is known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, with a population of six to seven hundred million, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great Britain, France, Japan, the U.S.A., etc.... Let us assume that *all* the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the "peaceful" division of these parts of Asia: this alliance would be an alliance of "internationally united finance capital." There are actual examples of alliances of this kind in the history of the twentieth century—the attitude of the powers to China, for instance. We ask, is it "conceivable," assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in every possible form?

The question has only to be presented clearly for any other than a negative answer to be impossible. This is because the only conceivable basis under capitalism for the division of spheres of influence, interests, colonies, etc., is a calculation of the *strength* of those participating, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. And the strength of these participants in the division does not change to an equal degree, for the *even* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry, or countries is impossible under capitalism....

Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German "Marxist," Kautsky, "inter-imperialist" or "ultra-imperialist" alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing *all* the imperialist powers, are *inevitably* nothing more than a "truce" in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, producing alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle on *one and the same* basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and world politics.

—V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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Justice, New York Style: First They Shoot the Man, Then They Sue the Family

For the past four years, the Busch family has been waging a legal battle against the New York Police Department over the August 1999 fatal shooting of Gidone Busch, a mentally ill Hasidic Jew. The Busch family sued the six cops who shot Gidone as well as the city administration in federal court. Unfortunately, they did not win. Now, in a despicable and depraved move, the city administration is suing the Busch family for *$176,000* to get back legal costs! After suffering the grief of their loss, the hardship of a four-year battle and an outrageous verdict clearing the cops, the Busch family is now faced with the vindictive legal assaults of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's lawyers in an attempt to drain their financial resources.

The killing of Gidone Busch came amid a reign of police terror in New York City—like the sadistic torture of Haitian immigrant Abner Louima and the death-squad-style execution of black African Amadou Diallo. According to witnesses, Gidone was holding a hammer at the time he was killed. Much like how the cops who killed Diallo were acquitted because his reaching for a wallet was considered "threatening," the cops who killed Gidone were cleared of any wrongdoing on the basis that the hammer posed a "threat." This was in spite of the fact that these cops shot a volley of 12 bullets into a mentally ill man whom they were originally called upon to help! A 28 December *New York Times* article, "The Intersection of Troubled People and Armed Police," describes how the cops form a semicircle around the "emotionally disturbed person" with guns drawn.

The Bloomberg administration's legal assault on the Busch family is an assault on all those in the cross hairs of the NYPD, particularly black people and immigrants. It sets a dangerous precedent: when you sue the cops for brutally beating you or killing a loved one, not only will they likely be acquitted, but you may be held liable for the cost of the lawsuit. And it demonstrates, yet again, that the capitalist courts are not "neutral" arbiters but exist to serve the interests of the capitalist rulers. Likewise, the cops serve to protect capitalist property not human life. The only way to get rid of cop terror for good is to get rid of the capitalist system itself. What is called for is the building of a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle to sweep away the entire machinery of capitalist state repression. ■

Edward Said
Passionate Advocate of Palestinian Freedom, Human Dignity

After 12 years with leukemia, Edward Said, passionate advocate for Palestinian rights and scholar of modern literature, died on September 25. A tribute by the British *Independent*'s Near East reporter Robert Fisk was appropriately titled: "Palestinian, Intellectual, and Fighter, Edward Said Rails Against Arafat and Sharon to His Dying Breath" (26 September 2003). In his last years, every public appearance Said made, especially if it involved travel, turned into a protracted battle with his advancing disease and the advice of his close friend and doctor, who he was quick to remind his Arab colleagues was Jewish. But he would not be stopped.

He devoted one of his last speeches to the dignity and courage of Rachel Corrie, the International Solidarity Movement member crushed to death by an Israeli Army bulldozer in March for trying to stop the demolition of a Palestinian home in Gaza:

> "We need to remember that that kind of solidarity is no longer confined to a small number of intrepid souls here and there, but is recognized the world over.
> "Whenever the facts are made known, there is immediate recognition and an expression of the most profound solidarity with the justice of the Palestinian cause and the valiant struggle by the Palestinian people on its behalf."
> —*CounterPunch*, 23 June 2003

No one had done more than Said to make those facts known. The sworn enemy of cant, demagogy and hypocrisy, he imbued the Palestinian cause with the integrity it deserved and presented it as part of a profoundly secular, universalist vision of human freedom.

Edward Said was born in Jerusalem in 1935. His very name expressed the confluence and clash of cultures. His father, Wadie, insisted on being called William. A successful businessman, he immigrated to the U.S. before World War I and obtained U.S. citizenship, then served in France during the war. His mother, Hilda, the daughter of a Nazareth Baptist minister, named her son after the Prince of Wales. Wadie imposed a strict Victorian upbringing on their children. Arabic was forbidden at home except when addressing servants. It was banned at school. Only English was permitted, although all the students had another native language, which they used among themselves behind their teachers' backs. In this stifling atmosphere, Said got himself expelled from the last school he attended in Egypt, fittingly named Victoria College.

Wherever he went, Said felt *Out of Place*, as he titled his 1999 memoirs about his childhood and student days. In Palestine, the Saids were members of a Christian minority with American passports. After the 1948 Israeli-Arab War in which 68 percent of the Palestinian population was expelled, Edward Said spent most of his childhood in Egypt. There the Saids were "Shami" in the double meaning in which Egyptians use this term, designating non-Egyptian Arab speakers as well as people from "Greater Syria" (Syria, Lebanon and Palestine).

With the thoroughly corrupt and rotten edifice of British colonial Egypt under King Farouk crumbling about them, the Saids shipped Edward off to boarding school in Massachusetts. He described those years as the most miserable of his life, as he was the only Arab in the very preppy student body. He went on to Princeton and graduate work at Harvard, where he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Joseph Conrad, the great Polish-born novelist who became a British citizen and wrote in his acquired language, English. Against those who tried to reduce the novelist either to his Polish background or fondness for things English, with no small measure of empathy Said later wrote: "Eventually we realise that [his] work is actually constituted by the experience of exile or alienation that cannot ever be rectified" ("Between Worlds," *London Review of Books*, 7 May 1998).

After visiting the West Bank in 1998, Said was invited to speak in Nazareth. Annexed by Israel in 1948, it is the largest Palestinian Arab city in the "Jewish state." In his lecture, Said admitted to knowing little of the Palestinian second-class citizens of Israel

> "who had been regarded in the Arab world as little short of traitors for remaining as non-Jewish citizens of Israel.
> "It now struck me, I said, that Israeli Palestinians had become crucial for our future as a people since, given their circumstances as non-Jews in a Jewish state, they dramatised the anomalies of nationalism and theocracy throughout the Middle East. Nationalism had become the dead end of our political life, demanding endless sacrifices and the abrogation of democracy for the sake of national security."
> —"West Bank Diary," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 10-16 December 1998

Said, the champion of Palestinian national emancipation, was very much the "rootless cosmopolitan." He could not fully belong in either Palestinian or Egyptian society because his background was Christian. At the same time, he could not belong in American society because he was Palestinian. In his memoirs, Said describes how in some circles he would emphasize that his name was Edward, while in others he would emphasize Said. He embodied the heretical temperament that Polish Marxist Isaac Deutscher in "The Non-Jewish Jew" ascribes to "those great revolutionaries of modern thought: Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Freud":

> "They were *a priori* exceptional in that as Jews they dwelt on the borderlines of various civilizations, religions, and national cultures. They were born and brought up on the borderlines of various epochs. Their mind matured where the most diverse cultural influences crossed and fertilized each other."
> —*The Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays* (1968)

Said represented that small minority from the Near East who are alienated from what they call home yet can never free themselves from it, whom the world sees as Arabs but whose fellow Arabs often see as foreigners, who find themselves caught between two very different worlds where they belong to neither. For Said, modern Arab society, with its inwardness, exclusivity and religious fanaticism, was far too constricting. And Western society, with its immense arrogance, brutality and hypocrisy, could not provide an alternative.

Northfield Mount Hermon

1935-2003

Impact of 1967 Arab-Israeli War

In 1963 Said joined the Columbia University faculty where he was headed toward a distinguished but otherwise uneventful career as a scholar of modern European literature and literary criticism. As he wrote in "Between Worlds":

> "The big change came with the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, which coincided with a period of intense political activism on campus over civil rights and the Vietnam War. I found myself naturally involved on both fronts, but, for me, there was the further difficulty of trying to draw attention to the Palestinian cause. After the Arab defeat there was a vigorous re-emergence of Palestinian nationalism, embodied in the resistance movement located mainly in Jordan and the newly occupied territories. Several friends and members of my family had joined the movement, and when I visited Jordan in 1968, 69 and 70, I found myself among a number of like-minded contemporaries. In the US, however, my politics were rejected—with a few notable exceptions—both by anti-war activists and by supporters of Martin Luther King. For the first time I felt genuinely divided between the newly assertive pressures of my background and language and the complicated demands of a situation in the US that scanted, in fact despised what I had to say about the quest for Palestinian justice—which was considered anti-Semitic and Nazi-like."
> —*London Review of Books*, 7 May 1998

Said always insisted that the Hebrew-speaking nation has a right to exist and to self-determination in Palestine. However, it has ***no right*** to a "Jewish state" through the expulsion and suppression of the indigenous Palestinian nation.

The humiliating defeat in 1967 of the Arab nationalist regimes as well as Jordan's King Hussein, who in 1970 carried out the slaughter of some 10,000 Palestinians during the Black September massacres, spurred the development of Palestinian guerrilla groups. Even the largest and most moderate, Yasir Arafat's Fatah, which dominated the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), proclaimed "armed struggle" as its main strategy. However, in 1974 the PLO-led Palestine National Council (PNC) adopted a "Transitional Program" for a state in the West Bank as "a link in the chain of the strategy...to establish the Democratic Palestine state." At the time, we warned that such a "mini-state" would serve as a South Africa-like bantustan serving as a dumping ground for unwanted refugees. Nevertheless, we would defend the right of the Palestinians to set up their own government in the Occupied Territories "as a partial and deformed application of their right to self-determination" (*WV* No. 58, 6 December 1974).

Said first praised the "mini-state" proposal as an expression of the PLO's new realism, and in 1977 was elected to the PNC. But he grew disillusioned with the PLO's corruption and Arafat's despotism. Finally, Said resigned from the PNC, along with Ibrahim Abu Lughd, Abdulmuhsen Qattan, Mahmoud Darwish and Shafiq Al Hout, over Arafat's support to Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Meanwhile in 1987, the first *Intifada* or uprising of Palestinian youth swept through the Occupied Territories. Despite the brutal repression by Israeli stormtroopers, dubbed the "Iron Fist," this rebellion could not be suppressed. With America's quick military crushing of Iraq and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Arafat rushed to conclude the Oslo "Peace Accords." This was not even a deformed expression of self-determination but the PLO placing its "seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (*WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Said became the most trenchant Palestinian critic of Oslo, branding it "an instrument of Palestinian surrender, a Palestinian Versailles" (*London Review of Books*, 21 October 1993). Unmentioned by the accord were the national rights of the millions of Palestinians in exile. The issue of the settlements, inhabited by fanatical anti-Arab racists and outright fascist auxiliaries of the Israeli army, was "postponed." Since 1993, the number of settlers has more than doubled. According to a report by B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights group, "Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank" (reported by the London *Guardian*, 15 May 2002), fully 42 percent of Palestinian land in the West Bank has been seized

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Iraq...

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three-kilometer queue (an overnight wait) for gasoline sold at extortionist prices by Kellogg, Brown & Root—a subsidiary of Halliburton, which bilked the U.S. government for more than $120 million in scams whose costs are passed on to U.S. and Iraqi workers—and you get a glimmer of the physical suffering of the Iraqi people today. And that's just the objective hardships.

The population also seethes under the daily insult and terror of foreign occupation. Israeli commandos are training U.S. special forces units in what's euphemistically called "preventive manhunting": i.e., killing civilians in search-and-destroy missions. Entire neighborhoods are raided or flattened, families torn apart and jailed, the less fortunate shot on sight. Borrowing a page from the infamous Israeli wall cut through Palestinian territory, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Sussaman commanded a battalion to surround the town of Abu Hishma with a razor wire fence. Aping Dr. Strangelove, Sussaman explained: "With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them" (*Asia Times*, 13 December 2003).

We had a clear side in the war: ***for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialism and its allies***. Today we take a clear stand for the military defense of those who resist the imperialist occupation of Iraq. We lend not one iota of political support to remnants of the Ba'athist regime or Islamic fundamentalist forces seeking to impose their own reactionary agendas on Iraqi women, workers, ethnic and religious minorities. But we understand that there will be no freedom or justice for the long-suffering Iraqi people until the imperialist occupiers are driven out! We fight for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. imperialist and allied troops and we unconditionally oppose their replacement by UN blue helmets! As communists here in the belly of the beast, we have a special responsibility to make working people in this country conscious of the intrinsic connection between the attacks on their living standards, their right to strike and their basic democratic rights by the U.S. government on the "home front" and the imperialist occupation of Iraq. We say: *Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! U.S. troops out of Iraq!*

Getty

"War on terror" at home: Sniper in chopper patrolling over New York City on New Year's Eve.

Getty

Iraqi women in Kirkuk on hunger strike to demand release of family members jailed by U.S. occupation forces.

Military Occupation of Iraq Targets Labor

On 6 December 2003, the American occupation forces attacked the headquarters of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) in Baghdad; eight of its leaders were handcuffed, kidnapped and held overnight. The office was ransacked, IFTU banners, posters and other possessions were destroyed, the IFTU's name and that of the General Union of Transport Workers on the front of the building was smeared with black paint, and the windows were smashed. The international labor movement protested this outrage with statements issued by the powerful South African COSATU federation, the Italian CGIL and British trade unions. On November 23, the occupation forces raided the office shared by the Union of the Unemployed in Iraq (UUI) and the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq (WCPI). When a WCPI and a UUI leader turned up, as requested, at occupation authority headquarters, they were arrested. During July and August 2003, some 54 UUI members and the union president were arrested for sit-in protests.

Meanwhile, the U.S. occupation forces have enthusiastically embraced torturers, spies, police and other government agents of the Hussein regime to "stabilize" Iraq. They even resurrected a labor law from the old regime which forbids workers in the state oil industry from organizing a union. To back up Hussein-era anti-worker laws, U.S. occupation chief Paul Bremer issued a new regulation about "prohibited activity," which is defined as encouraging anybody to organize any kind of strike or disruption in a factory or any kind of economically important enterprise. The penalty for breaching labor law in occupied Iraq is to be arrested by the occupation authorities and treated as a prisoner of war!

Those Iraqis who find employment literally work under U.S. guns. An Iraqi construction worker at the Baghdad airport, Muiwafa al Saidy, described how "soldiers aim guns at us wherever we go, even to the toilet." Workers are paid $5.00 per day but $2.00 is skimmed by their "translator" who tells them they will be turned in to the soldiers as "terrorists" unless he gets his cut. Adding to the tension is the continual roundup of new prisoners brought to a fenced area of the airport compound, including "children brought in from the soccer fields, balls in hand, old men in their 80s, and even hospital patients carrying their drip bags." A 20 October 2003 Internet article by David Bacon titled "The Occupation's War on Iraqi Workers" stated that al Saidy has seen the prisoners' food thrown on the ground and also seen them beaten with sticks.

More than half the recruits for the new imperialist-sponsored Iraqi army walked out because the pay was so low and the treatment so bad. The soles of their boots flapped and fell off and their uniforms are pink and green and brown camouflage and shrink dramatically if washed. An Iraqi major said, "The men ask me, 'Are we really going out in these clothes?'" Attempts to make the new army a "rainbow coalition" of Iraq's diverse ethnic groups blew up in a cauldron of tensions. One hundred Kurds quit in the first few weeks.

Occupation Is Big Bu$ine$$

How is it that a company like Bechtel, which built the Hoover Dam, can't turn the light switch on in Iraq? Answer: they don't want to. An article titled "Iraq Reconstruction's Bottom-Line," (*Asia Times*, 25 December 2003) states: "Another popular explanation making the rounds alleges that sabotaging the reconstruction is a conscious and deliberate effort on the part of the occupation forces to make the Iraqis completely dependent and subservient." The press conferences where Bush and Cheney promised that American troops would be greeted as liberators were a line of crap designed to whip up domestic support for and disguise the American rape of Iraq. But it's not mainly psychological terror, it's just the best way for robber barons to make big bucks in the "free market" bonanza they drool for in Iraq. Yaaruh Jasim, general director for the southern region of Iraq's electricity ministry, has been pleading with Bechtel to get urgently needed spare parts for Iraq's antiquated turbines. Parts are readily available from the companies which built the turbines—in Russia, France and Germany...the very countries banned from getting contracts in Iraq. (Washington has gone so loopy that even that notorious "rogue state" *Canada*, was banned from contracts in reprisal for its milquetoast opposition to the war!)

Bechtel could let the turbines rust and crumble until they are completely useless. *Then* they'll bid to build new billion-dollar power plants themselves. As company founder Stephen Bechtel quipped, "We are not in the construction and engineering business. We are in the business of making money" (*Asia Times*, 25 December 2003). And Bechtel stands to make a ton of it, perhaps $20 billion or more in the pillage of Iraq. Ditto for Iraq's oil industry, which badly needs repair to refine enough crude for domestic consumption. Yet the U.S. is exporting Iraqi crude oil while giving Kellogg, Brown & Root, the company which is supposed to repair the refineries, the contract to import oil from Turkey and Kuwait. Charging more than twice what they paid for this imported fuel, KBR had no incentive to repair Iraq's refineries.

On 19 September 2003, the U.S. occupation authorities issued "Order No. 39," which permits 100-percent foreign ownership of businesses, including formerly state-owned industries, except oil, and repatriation of profits. This outright brigandage—a fire sale of Iraq's natural resources and the wealth created by the Iraqi working people to U.S. imperialist corporations, with a few crumbs tossed to allies—is so explosive that the U.S. is considering delaying their plans. A manager of the Al Daura refinery predicted that privatization would mean firing 1,500 of the plant's 3,000 workers. In light of the conditions in Iraq today, this manager said, "If I dismiss employees now, I'm killing them and their families."

Blood and Oil

Iraq's borders were drawn on a map by the British, who carved up the old Ottoman Empire after the First World War, forcibly compacting three different peoples together in an artificial "nation" for the benefit of imperialist exploitation of resources and labor and for diplomatic advantage. Together with the U.S., the British set up the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), which had exploration rights to practically the entire country. After the 1958 insurrection that installed Brigadier Abd al-Karim Qassim, Iraq took back 99.5 percent of the land originally allocated to the IPC. In 1972, Iraq nationalized the IPC and became the first Arab country to take over a Western-owned oil corporation. Nationalization of the oil was a hugely popular move and possession of Iraq's most precious resources provided the Ba'athist authorities with the wealth to build an extensive social infrastructure including free public services—something the Gulf monarchies, Iranian Shah or Ayatollahs surely never did. Oil wealth also provided the Ba'athists with the economic clout to build a massive arsenal of police-state repression which was brutally deployed against the workers movement and the left.

The U.S. now has its hands on the oil spigot in Iraq and Kuwait, and the "Seven Sisters" are ready to leap back into Libya now that the U.S. has morphed Qaddafi from "international outlaw" to a reasonable man to do business with. Secret negotiations between Qaddafi and British agents began as soon as the U.S. rained its devastating "shock and awe" on Iraq. Qaddafi decided to avoid "regime change" U.S.-style and made a deal to pay $2.7 billion to the families of victims of the 1988 Pan Am jet bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, and allow UN weapons inspectors to strip Libya of whatever defense capacity it has, in exchange for a relaxation of economic sanctions. Ever the grandstander, Qaddafi says he hopes that his move will encourage Israel to disarm its doomsday machine. Fat chance. Arming Israel to the teeth is a linchpin of U.S. policy in the region.

A top-secret document declassified in Britain on January 1 reveals that U.S. president Richard Nixon considered launching airborne troops to seize oil fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi in response to OPEC's oil embargo launched in retaliation for America's support to Israel in the 1973 Near East war. Another document reveals that Nixon put American forces on a *global nuclear alert*

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during the 1973 war. We've said that the Near East could be a trip wire for World War III. Today the U.S. arsenal of death so vastly outstrips the capacity of any other imperialist power that no country is eager to spark a war in which they're outgunned. But this situation will not last forever, and the American machinations in the Near East and the "Bush doctrine" of "pre-emptive war" without a UN cloak or European allies have strained the old NATO alliance. The heightened inter-imperialist rivalries outline new wars to come. Gulf War Two was as much or more intended to "shock and awe" America's imperialist rivals as it was about oil.

To very little fanfare in the bourgeois press, the U.S. passed a bill in early December that puts the U.S. openly and officially back in the business of developing and testing nuclear weapons for the first time since the Cold War ended with capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The bill funds research for so-called "mini-nukes" with an explosive power described as "only" up to a third that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima! The bill also funds development of "bunker buster" warheads designed to go deep into the earth and destroy buried bunkers or command centers. To explode nuclear bombs the size the U.S. is projecting in "bunker busting" groundbursts will irradiate densely populated cities.

The "bunker busters" are part of the U.S. nuclear threat against the North Korean deformed workers state. Following the devastation of the Korean War, North Korea built its military apparatus as deeply underground as possible because anything visible could easily be wiped

Mike Luckovich/Atlanta Journal-Constitution

out by the U.S. again. As Bruce Cumings, a scholar of Korea, points out, "The only problem with Rumsfeld's war plan is that no technology yet developed or imagined can penetrate the earth's surface for more than about fifty feet, which is why cruise missiles could not eliminate Saddam Hussein on the night the Iraq invasion began.... The only answer is larger and larger warheads, so that you target Kim Jong Il and wipe out a large urban neighbourhood, or maybe a city" (*London Review of Books*, 4 December 2003).

As the American empire redraws the map of the Near East, using the United Nations to disarm its targets, it could not be clearer that nuclear weapons are the only effective guarantee of national sovereignty. With the North Korean deformed workers state in Washington's cross hairs, as part of the U.S. drive for capitalist counterrevolution there and in China, we Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defense of North Korea and its right to possess nuclear weapons. From the former Central Asian Soviet republics and Afghanistan to U.S. forces in the Philippines, the Chinese deformed workers state is now literally ringed by the worldwide expansion of U.S. military bases. China is the ultimate prize the imperialists are after, and they are applying pressure militarily and through massive encroachments of capital in "free trade" zones which are criminally encouraged by the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy. The fate of the Chinese workers state will have a profound impact on humanity, far greater even than U.S. imperialism's rape of Iraq. Capitalist counterrevolution would pauperize the most populous country on earth and further devastate the masses of Asia. What's needed is a workers political revolution to defend the Chinese workers state and institute workers democracy, which would be a huge defeat for imperialism and encourage proletarian struggle around the globe. *We stand for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam! U.S. get your bloody hands off the world!*

The Left Between Iraq and a Hard Place

Shamelessly, the Iraqi Communist Party (CP) serves in the "Governing Council," the facade of stooges hand-picked by the Americans to lend legitimacy to the occupation. The Iraqi CP boasts on its Web site of "serious and frank discussions" held between the secretary of its Central Committee and the American top cop in Iraq, Paul Bremer, and his deputy, British Ambassador John Sawers. As if fronting for the occupation wasn't bad enough, the Iraqi CP calls on "activating the role of the United Nations"—the agency that murdered more than one and a half million Iraqi civilians with its sanctions—"in guiding the on-going political process in Iraq, as well as its role in relief operations and reconstruction" (18 October 2003 statement by the International Department of the Central Committee).

The Iraqi Communist Party used to be the largest, most proletarian Communist party in the Near East and recruited a large cadre of national, religious and ethnic groups. In 1958, a revolutionary upsurge was touched off when the Iraqi Free Officers movement overthrew the British-installed monarchy and brought the bourgeois nationalist Abd al-Karim Qassim to power. A revolutionary wave swept the countryside as peasants seized the land, and the Communist Party made spectacular gains in the cities. Workers revolution was on the order of the day, but the CP and Kremlin bureaucrats insisted that the party get no more than representation in the capitalist government. But Qassim and the anti-Communist nationalists knew the workers wanted more and so took the offensive to repress the CP. This was but a prelude for the bloodbath to come at the hands of the Ba'athists, who brought down Qassim in 1963 and hunted down Communists with lists supplied by the CIA. An estimated 5,000 were killed and thousands more jailed and tortured. (For a full discussion, see "Near East, 1950s: Permanent Revolution vs. Bourgeois Nationalism," *WV* Nos. 740 and 741, 25 August and 8 September 2000.) The Iraqi CP's hatred for the Ba'athists is utterly correct, but to front for the American occupation against them is *class treason* and likely every bit as suicidal as the CP's earlier subordination to Qassim.

What about the ostensibly more leftist Worker-Communist Party of Iraq? While denouncing the "Governing Council" and opposing the U.S. occupation, the WCPI simply *equates* the imperialists and their stooges with Islamic and Ba'athist forces. The title of its article "'Occupation' and Resistance: Two Poles Within the Same Reactionary Camp" (*Forward*, 15 December 2003) gives the game away. The article condemns the

Rad/Gamma

Halabja, 1988: Kurdish victims of poison gas attack by Saddam Hussein. U.S. and British governments rewarded Hussein with millions in aid following this atrocity.

resistance as "a direct declaration of a reactionary war, which is not in essence pertinent to demands and expectations of the masses in Iraq."

Like the Iraqi CP, the WCPI calls for UN forces to enter Iraq, insisting that this is necessary to "provide security and stability." Both the Iraqi CP and the WCPI are playing a reactionary role in telling the Iraqi masses that peace and stability demands tacit acceptance of foreign occupation and that salvation lies with the den of thieves in the UN. This is a reactionary call to accept the rape of Iraq by imperialist powers that are looting what's left of the productive capacity of the country, plunging the proletariat into further misery and impoverishment, while grabbing the natural resources for their own profits. The U.S. raids on the trade-union headquarters are just a hint of the terrible repression to come, including against "responsible" leftists who ally with the U.S. against the Ba'athists. In politics it is essential to know that the enemy of my enemy is not necessarily my friend!

Behind the CP and WCPI's reliance on the UN and/or U.S. imperialist troops to oppose the Ba'athists is their rejection of the politically independent mobilization of the Iraqi proletariat in struggle against imperialist domination, capitalist exploitation, religious obscurantism and reactionary bourgeois nationalism. It is urgently necessary to *forge Trotskyist parties* in the Near East, armed with the program of *permanent revolution*. There will be no emancipation of the women of the region, of the oppressed national minorities, of the exploited workers, short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions which sweep away the sheiks, colonels and Zionists and imperialist occupiers, and which link up with proletarian revolution in the West. *For a socialist federation of the Near East! For world socialist revolution!*

The Enemy Is at Home: U.S. Imperialism

Wall Street likes the Iraq occupation: the Dow Jones stock market index topped 10,000, making a few more millionaires while the mass of American workers suffer through what the bosses cynically call "the jobless recovery." The presidential campaign has swung into gear and that means that the treacherous trade-union leaders are plunking union funds not into strike war chests but chiefly into the coffers of the capitalist Democratic Party. Between the two parties there's no choice for working people or minorities; indeed there's not much difference between the two. The Bush gang in the White House received overwhelming Democratic support for the draconian Patriot Act, which sets the pretext for stripping away the democratic rights of all in this country.

So-called "antiwar" candidate Howard Dean explained his campaign to beat Bush as follows: "I'm going to outflank him to the right on homeland security, on weapons of mass destruction and on the Saudis.... Our model is to get around the president's right, as John Kennedy did to Nixon" (*New York Times Magazine*, 4 January). Not even Dennis Kucinich says he would withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq immediately. He says, "UN in, U.S. out" and projects a three-month plan for U.S. withdrawal.

There are seething discontents in this country, including in the military which is disproportionately black and Latino. Welfare has been slashed and as the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision approaches, America becomes increasingly segregated. More black men in the U.S. are thrown behind bars than get into college. From growing anger with the war to fury over corporate greed and scandals reaching up to the White House while working people get layoffs, plant closings, bans on strikes, unaffordable health care, diminishing abortion rights, anti-immigrant racism and cop terror in the ghettos and barrios—class and social struggles over such issues would help crack the reactionary social consensus Bush has exploited since the September 11 attacks and the onset of the "war on terror."

Our message to the American workers is that the same ruling class that is waging war on the people of Iraq is waging war on labor, blacks, immigrants, youth and women at home. The American proletariat has to understand that the purpose of the U.S. occupation of Iraq is imperialist plunder and global hegemony over the American rulers' rivals. It is in the workers' own class interest to oppose this. Every strike, every protest in Iraq that puts a dent in the American rulers' war on Iraq is a victory for the side of labor here at home. Every victory for labor and minorities here at home is a blow to American imperialism's attacks on working people abroad.

The excruciating contradiction is that American workers hold in their hands the potential power to save humanity from the nuclear nuts in the White House and to use the tremendous wealth of this country for socially useful purposes worldwide. Yet thanks to the illusions promoted by the trade-union misleaders, there is little awareness in the proletariat of its position in this society and the enormous power it has if mobilized as a class in its own interest. The consciousness of the class that has the social power to change society lags behind its objective conditions and development. To resolve this contradiction it is necessary to build a revolutionary integrated workers party, and the Spartacist League is dedicated to this purpose. *Break with the Democrats! For a workers party to fight for socialist revolution! All U.S. troops out of Iraq now!*■

Marxism, War and the Fight for Socialist Revolution

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Young Spartacus

Miami FTAA Protest:
Cops Rampage Against Youth, Labor
What Strategy to Defeat Imperialism?

This article is based on eyewitness reports from SYC comrades.

Thousands of protesters from across the U.S., and to a lesser extent Canada and Latin America, gathered in Miami during the week of November 17 to protest the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), as government ministers holed up in the downtown Hotel Inter-Continental were negotiating the pact's terms.

The FTAA represents the potential extension of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere, excluding Cuba. From NAFTA's inception in 1994, the International Communist League has opposed the pact as U.S. imperialism's "free trade" rape of Mexico; it has since brought increased misery and poverty to the people of Mexico. The U.S. is pursuing the FTAA as a means to further cement its control over the smaller capitalist states in Central and South America in the face of greater economic competition from rival imperialist powers in Europe and Asia. The fight against NAFTA and the FTAA is a battle against imperialist domination of Mexico and all of the Americas.

One unofficial slogan of the anti-globalization movement is "Another world is possible." Some steel workers in Miami even had the slogan emblazoned across the backs of their union T-shirts. How to bring about that other world? A range of political opinions was on display. The AFL-CIO officials presented the protests as an opportunity "to educate our elected officials and candidates in preparation for the 2004 elections" and collected "ballots" from "millions of workers" from the Americas opposing the FTAA. Liberals like those in the coalition United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), in a call endorsed by the reformist International Socialist Organization and Left Turn among others, sought to inspire the delegates of poorer countries at the FTAA talks to walk out, as Brazil's Lula did at the Cancún WTO meetings earlier last year. Many youth activists, identifying themselves as anarchists and rejecting reliance on any government officials, wanted to disrupt the FTAA meeting through direct action. None of these tactics will actually stop the FTAA.

AP

Miami, November 20: Direct action protest at security fence surrounding meeting site of FTAA talks.

The FTAA talks did end a day early, without a broad agreement. But this failure was not a result of the protests. As one radio reporter observed, at the Inter-Continental the demonstrations went unheeded by the delegates, confident in the protection accorded by the armed police camp in the downtown area. Instead, this failure was due to the competing national economic interests of the capitalist governments involved in the FTAA.

Ultimately there is no way to stop capitalist exploitation and bring about a just world short of working-class socialist revolution. We look to the working class as the only force in society that has the ability and class interest to defeat imperialism.

Miami Blues: Armed Police Camp

Miami was witness to a massive police mobilization, now routine at anti-globalization demos. The "security" measures were underwritten by $8.5 million from the federal government, allocated in the spending bill for the Iraq occupation. Also borrowed from the "war on terror" in Iraq: Miami police invited reporters to "embed" with them in armored vehicles and helicopters. The bourgeois media, civic leaders and Miami police engaged in an orgy of anarchist-bashing in the lead-up to the protests; several "suspected anarchists" (youth with backpacks walking down the street) were arrested. Days before the protests began, the Miami City Commission passed an ordinance banning the use and possession of common items like glass bottles and the puppets used in street theater.

On Thursday, the main day of protests, the cops totally shut down central Miami. Stores and offices were closed, the streets were empty, the elevated rail system was locked up, with cops perched at the stations. The police, many in full riot gear, unleashed a variety of weapons from batons and tasers to rubber bullets and water cannons. Youth were allowed to gather at Government Center Park at 7 a.m. but were swarmed by cops when they broke off into smaller groups engaging in direct actions.

Later that day at the end of the AFL-CIO-sponsored parade demanding "No to the FTAA!", some anarchoid youth and a small number of steel workers advanced to the security perimeter fence separating the rally site from the Inter-Continental. The cops decided to end the rally on their own terms, attacking and dispersing the protesters. Youth and steel workers alike were injured in the onslaught. As we retreated, we talked to several youth who were assaulted, including a young man who was shot in the leg and hobbled and another who was shot in the back with a paint ball. Outside the "Wellness Center," the temporary medical clinic set up by the protesters, a long line had formed. The cops later attacked the center.

"This should be a model for homeland defense," Miami mayor Manny Diaz would later say. Almost 300 protesters were arrested, including 62 in a protest outside Miami-Dade County Jail the next day in solidarity with those arrested on Thursday. The Partisan Defense Committee issued a statement on November 24 demanding: "Free the arrested protesters and drop all charges now!"

The Miami events were a vivid lesson in how the capitalist state cannot be neutral but is rather the armed and violent defender of the capitalist order. The armed police camp in downtown Miami was a complete refutation of those leftists who peddle the illusion that the capitalist state, sufficiently pressured, can serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. However, this lesson was not necessarily generalized by all. Even youth crippled in the cop rampages thought that the "Convergence Center" was a safe place to assemble afterwards. While it was not raided, police had it staked out and picked off protesters as they came and went. There was this dangerous belief that if one declares a "safe space" or "autonomous zone" it thereby exists. Not so—black inner-city youth or the hundreds of immigrants locked up in federal detention centers can attest to the brutal daily reality of police repression.

Proletarian Internationalism or Pressure Politics?

Despite the naked display of capitalist "law and order" in Miami, many youth were intent on somehow disrupting the

Puck

Cops went on rampage, assaulting and arresting protesters throughout the main day of demos.

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meetings. This impulse to fight the "system" through well-intentioned, but futile, acts of self-sacrifice sprang from a gut hatred of their "own" government and its attempts to ride roughshod over the rest of the globe. What often was behind this justified hatred was a misplaced feeling of responsibility for the fundamentally oppressive character of American capitalism.

But youth and the working masses do not share the blame for the crimes of the brutal U.S. ruling class, which exploits workers, makes life miserable for black people and goes to war for itself alone. It only serves the class enemy for radical youth in this country to feel guilt for these crimes, because this guilt flows from the dangerously false idea that the capitalist U.S. is or could be pressured into being a democracy "for the people" if only the anti-globalization youth were determined or creative enough to make the rulers pay attention. Under the circumstances of the anti-globalization protests, the cops will assault, brutalize and arrest youth without fail. Lacking a perspective of mobilizing the working class against the rule of capital, such confrontations with the cops amount to the streetfighting face of reformism.

Ultimately what is at work is an idealist conception of social change, which sees the transformation of society as resulting from enlightening the "misinformed" or tempering social attitudes like "greed" and racism in capitalist society. From the exploitation of the working masses to the racial oppression of black people, the evils of the capitalist world are not simply a matter of retrograde ideas; they are materially rooted in a system based on exploitation and oppression. This material reality we seek to change.

The direct action protests were meant to "raise consciousness" and inspire others to follow, thereby building a mass movement against "globalization" and bringing closer victory in the future. Who was to be inspired? For some, it was the representatives of "progressive" Third World countries at the FTAA negotiating table, e.g., the Brazilian and Venezuelan governments. A speaker from Venezuela at an anti-globalization conference on the University of Miami campus that Friday hailed Hugo Chávez for supposedly carrying forward the "Bolivarian Revolution" by refusing to sign on to an FTAA lacking human rights provisions and, above all, protections of national sovereignty. Stickers from the group Alternativa Bolivariana para América Latina (ALBA), an outfit with ties to the Venezuelan government, were popular. Mention of Lula likewise brought praise and admiration for his leading the walkout at the Cancún WTO meeting.

A Spartacus Youth Club supporter responded to the Venezuelan speaker in the discussion round, pointing out how the Chávez government is tied in a thousand ways to the imperialist system. She counterposed the blow to that system delivered by the working class in the 1917 Russian Revolution. Whether it is the social democrat Lula attacking the Brazilian pension system or the nationalist strongman Chávez deregulating the Venezuelan banks, these politicians protect and defend the capitalist order. Notwithstanding the differences in their countries, their backgrounds and their politics, both Lula and Chávez are openly servile to the IMF, enforcing economic austerity dictates to curry favor with the imperialist powers. As well, both have sought to bring powerful unions to heel and reneged on promises of agrarian reform. Lula went so far as to recently expel left-wing critics of his economic policy from his own Workers Party. As our comrades in the Grupo Espartaquista de México observed:

> "The history of Latin American capitalism has been one of constant swings between populist protectionism and nationalist rhetoric on the one hand and 'free market' trade liberalization on the other. Alternatively, the bourgeoisie of these countries, frightened by the unrest of the masses, resorts to populism and protects its industry with tariff barriers and subsidies. Then, under the political pressure of imperialism and because of its own internal inefficacy, this model fails. The bourgeoisie, handing over the economy to the imperialists, resorts again to 'free market' liberalism, which in a few years fails, too, as it destroys the internal market and condemns the masses to even greater impoverishment, and then the cycle begins again. The rise of bourgeois rulers with populist rhetoric like Chávez in Venezuela and the social democrat Lula in Brazil points to the latter. The only constants in this inhuman wheel of fortune are imperialist subjugation and the human misery of millions of peasants and workers."
>
> —"¡Por movilizaciones obreras contra el TLC, el ALCA y las privatizaciones!" [For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA and Privatizations!], *Espartaco* No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003)

Young Spartacus

UNITE contingent in AFL-CIO march, November 20. Class-struggle labor leadership must be forged to unleash power of multiracial working class.

More consistent left-leaning anarchist youth had little affection for the capitalist governments of the Third World. One young woman observed how Lula put himself forward as a leftist candidate of the workers but was actually doing exactly what the U.S. demanded of him. Another "hoped to cause headaches" to the U.S. by arousing the Latin American masses.

Naomi Klein expressed a clearly reformist take on this position in her article on the Miami protests: "Despite the [Bush] brothers' best efforts, the dream of a hemisphere united into a single free-market economy died last week—killed not by demonstrators in Miami but by the populations of Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia, who let their politicians know that if they sign away more power to foreign multinationals, they may as well not come home" (London *Guardian*, 25 November 2003). This perspective, too, is the dead end of seeking to pressure bourgeois governments, in this case those of Latin America, to stand up to the depredations of capital.

It was "the people" that the more radical youth wanted to inspire. But "the people" invariably consists of members of different classes that have their own distinct interests. Lula and the Brazilian bourgeoisie have some interests in opposition to the U.S. imperialists, but are dependent on imperialism to maintain their own class rule and are not going to challenge the system as a whole. The existence of imperialism has arrested the development of the Third World, as the imperialist countries have already divided up the vast majority of the wealth and power. The investment of imperialist capital in countries like Mexico has resulted in uneven and combined development; age-old conditions of subjugation in the countryside exist alongside modern industry and a powerful proletariat.

As our comrades in the GEM wrote: "The social, economic and cultural development of Mexico can only be achieved through a ***socialist revolution*** which puts the proletariat in power, leading the peasant and indigenous masses and all the oppressed, and establishes a planned, socialist economy. From its inception, a victorious workers state in a backward country—which also shares a border with the U.S.—would have to fight to promote proletarian revolution inside the American imperialist beast and on a world scale. A socialist revolution in Mexico would really have an electrifying effect on the workers in the U.S."

Fighting the Imperialist Order

It is essential to understand what imperialism actually is in order to defeat it. Imperialism is a system, capitalism at its most developed stage, and is marked by the export of finance capital. What it is not is a series of belligerent government policies. The imperialist bourgeoisies, in pursuit of profits and spheres of economic influence, exploit the world's backward countries for raw resources, cheap labor and new markets. The constant competition and conflict between nation-states over such influence is the impetus to war. War is therefore an inevitable characteristic of imperialism.

Although it is an agreement between governments, the FTAA is referenced as another case of "globalization," supposedly a new world system in which sovereign nation-states are overtaken by transnational corporations. But these corporations do not and cannot operate without a national base. For example, many of the corporations involved in "rebuilding" Iraq today are multinational in the sense that they have capital invested in more than one country. Yet the corporations still retain their national base—it is ultimately the U.S. military and none other that enforces the property rights of these corporations.

Several groups claimed that "globalization" promotes war. Typical was the US Labor Against the War statement, which concludes: "Unfair trade policies destroy American jobs, impoverish workers around the globe, and lead to violence and military conflicts." Likewise, in a leaflet it distributed, the UFPJ argued: "Globalization undermines the ability of governments to regulate and mitigate the damaging effects of the market, which leads to an intensification of all of the economic causes of war." There is no fundamental separation of interests between the bourgeois state and its capitalist economy, whatever the particular policies of the government. The above views wrongly imply that the governments of capitalist states could betray the fundamental interests of their propertied class and that the imperialist system could be a peaceful one.

All the talk in recent years about "globalization" is a reflection not of any profound new economic transformation but rather of a tremendous political defeat, the collapse of the Soviet Union. As we noted in our pamphlet on "globalization":

> "A ***fundamental political condition*** for the present triumph of capitalist 'globalization' was the retreat of Soviet global power under Gorbachev, the disintegration of the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy and the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. It was no accident that the electoral overthrow of the [Nicaraguan] Sandinista regime in 1990, capping a contra war armed and organized by Washington, coincided with the beginning of a massive investment boom by U.S. banks and corporations in Mexico. At the same time, capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet sphere has opened up a new, huge sphere for exploitation, especially for German imperialism."
>
> —*Imperialism, the "Global Economy" and Labor Reformism* (September 1999)

We had several lengthy discussions with youth about the Soviet Union. One anarchist youth dismissed the USSR as a "statist" superpower; his attitude was one superpower down, one to go. To the contrary, the collapse of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state cleared the field for the hegemonic power of the U.S. The Soviet Union when it existed was a counterweight to U.S. imperialism.

A member of the North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists argued that the precipitous drop in the standard of living in post-Soviet Russia was due not to the restoration of capitalism but rather to the defeat of the USSR at the hands of (and its subsequent economic trampling by) the U.S. He made a comparison to the economic devastation in Germany following the First World War. He considered the class character of the society and its form of economic organization to be subordinate to the degree to which the state "interfered" with people's daily lives.

But the Soviet Union was not a capitalist country, in which production is for profit; it was a society based on the establishment of collectivized property and a planned economy, made possible by the expropriation of the capitalist class. Despite the degeneration of the Soviet workers state under Stalinist misrule, it was a measure of the power of the planned, collectivized economy that it provided jobs, housing, education and health care for all. Today, however, Russian life in all aspects is in drastic decline.

Opposition to imperialism requires defense of those gains the international working class has already won. We Trotskyists fought tooth and nail against capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union.

Treachery of the Labor Bureaucracy

The fundamental contradiction in capitalist society is the antagonism between

continued on page 8

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International and discusses the impact of the 1917 October Revolution. The first article addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called "death of communism," are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. The pamphlet is dedicated to the light to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism.

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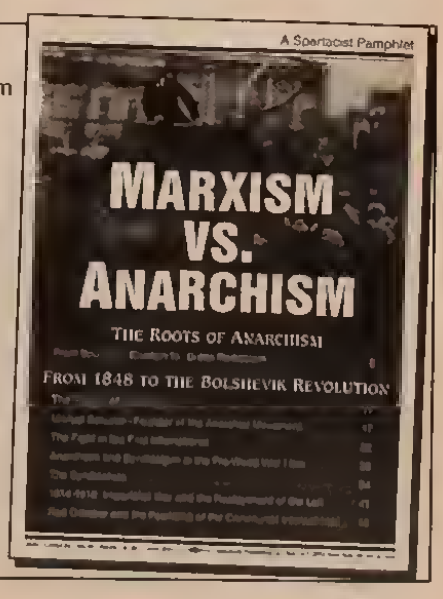

Defend the Berkeley Three!

At the University of California at Berkeley, three antiwar student leaders have been found guilty by the administration and penalized for their opposition to the imperialist rape of Iraq. The convictions stem from the students' role in organizing a demonstration on 20 March 2003, the day U.S. imperialism embarked on its terror bombing of Iraq. Approximately 4,000 students filled Sproul Plaza and about 400 occupied the front entrance of Sproul Hall, the main administrative building. The protesters demanded that the administration declare the University of Baghdad its sister school and that the university not increase student fees or cut staff wages during the war. They also demanded that the university not give student records, especially those of international students, to federal agencies. 119 sit-in protesters were dragged out by the police, arrested and threatened with discipline.

The administration ultimately dropped the charges against most of the students arrested, but fingered three prominent antiwar students—Snehal Shingavi, Rachel Odes and Michael Smith, all organizers of the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition—for prosecution by Student Judicial Affairs. At the university's kangaroo court hearings, the students' privately retained lawyer was prevented from effectively defending his clients and the doors were barred by university cops and security guards in an attempt to keep the students from mobilizing campus support. We say: *Cops off campus!*

Campus Antiwar Network

From left: Rachel Odes, Michael Smith, Snehal Shingavi.

The three faced bogus charges including "disturbing the peace and failing to comply with an official" but were selected and prosecuted by the administration on the basis of "prior offenses," that is, having organized and led demonstrations in the past. As the campus newspaper, the *Daily Californian*, aptly commented, "The message sent by the university seems to be that free speech includes the right to participate in a protest, but not the right to organize one."

Now the university administration, acting as the ideological watchdog for the bourgeoisie, has sentenced Shingavi and Odes to 20 hours of community service and placed a letter of reprimand in their permanent academic files. These two students are not just leaders of the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition, but supporters of the International Socialist Organization. Despite our very real differences with the reformist ISO, we vigorously defend these ISO spokesmen against victimization by the capitalist state and university administration, which has singled them out because of their leading role in protesting the U.S. war against and brutal occupation of Iraq. Michael Smith, the third student, was sentenced to 30 hours of community service, the same letter of reprimand and a one-semester suspension, which the administration grotesquely said might be commuted to a letter of reprimand if Smith submits to "anger management" at the University Student Health Center.

The attack on the Berkeley Three is an attempt to silence opposition on campus to Washington's drive for world domination. This is consistent with a pattern of attacks on protesters nationally the group Students for Justice in Palestine at Berkeley; Miguel Malo at Hostos Community College in the Bronx; the Palestinian Solidarity Movement at Rutgers; and Tony Van Der Meer at UMass Boston. It is also of a piece with the voluntary collaboration by campus administrations—like at San Francisco State University—in handing over the names of Near Eastern and other immigrant students to the FBI and the use of undercover police agents to spy on political activities. We say: *Down with the prosecution of student protesters! Abolish the administration! For worker-student-teacher control of the university!*

FTAA Protest...

(continued from page 7)

labor and capital. Workers create the wealth of this society with their labor and can bring the capitalists to their knees by withholding that labor power. With its vast numbers, its location in the urban centers and its hands on the means of production in the factories, where the common experience of workers lays the basis for solidarity and organization, the proletariat is the key social force to bring about the shattering of the imperialist order.

More than one youth argued that the American proletariat no longer has any social power due to the disappearance of jobs and the transformation of the American economy from manufacturing to service-oriented industries. One pro-working-class anarchist youth argued that proletarian centrality is impossible today, essentially claiming that only by defeating the FTAA and other supranational economic institutions will the working class recapture its social power in this country and save the Third World proletariat from the ravages of the "multinationals."

The decline of the American labor movement is not fundamentally caused by the objective effects of "globalization" but by the defeatist and treacherous policies of the AFL-CIO misleaders. The transfer of production to low-wage areas in semicolonial countries has led to a sharp decline in unionized manufacturing jobs here, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. But instead of seeking to organize international class struggle against attacks on jobs and unions, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy limits union struggle to what is acceptable to the U.S. capitalist rulers.

The strength of the unions is not in their paid lobbyists on Capitol Hill but in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline. What is crucial is the question of leadership. The existence of "multinationals" only underscores the historic need for an internationalist class-struggle perspective that transcends parochial, nationally limited trade unionism. We are for a class-struggle leadership in the trade unions. This is part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party that mobilizes the working class and all the oppressed against imperialist rule.

In Miami, the labor tops worked to keep the radical youth separate from the union ranks and the working class away from radical politics. Union marshals wearing "Peacekeeper" badges forcibly kept any youth wearing black from entering the amphitheater where the union rally was held; security patted down those who were not in labor contingents and used metal detector wands on them. Youth were disgusted by this exclusion, and we found anger at the treatment of the leftist youth among the workers.

Given that the protest was to "raise consciousness" against globalization, the "unity of anti-FTAA forces" was very important for many youth, irrespective of the broader political program of any of those forces. Whether one was for or against capitalism did not so much matter; in fact, an "anti-corporate" attitude was sometimes what youth meant when they said they were against capitalism. By this they meant opposition to "large monopolistic" corporations, not capitalism *per se*. Others subscribed to an anti-technology attitude. Much of the resentment against the AFL-CIO bureaucrats was not so much for making anarchist youth *persona non grata* as for breaking this unity. But pleas for "unity" with those who alibi capitalist rule can only reduce what is fought for to the lowest common denominator, namely Democratic Party electoralism.

Many youth did make a distinction between the steel workers and the AFL-CIO apparatus. The steel workers were spoken of with admiration for standing down cops harassing youth activists and widely cheered when they first arrived on Thursday. Then, the steel workers were prevented from entering the union rally site by the cops and later marched together with the youth to the security fence, taking arrests. But the leadership of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) is politically indistinguishable from that of the other AFL-CIO unions. Following the protests, the USWA tops called for a Congressional investigation into the police assaults, breeding illusions in supposed Congressional "impartiality" when the police repression had been paid for with money approved by Congress!

Central to the political outlook of the USWA officials is their protectionist "Stand Up For Steel" tariffs campaign, with its rhetoric of saving "American jobs" for "American workers." This outlook is shared by liberal Democratic presidential hopeful Dennis Kucinich, whose supporters mobilized widely for the demo. Protectionism is poison to the workers movement because it sets workers of one country against workers of another country, obscuring the reality that the enemy of both is the capitalist rulers at home. In his 11 November 2003 "anti-FTAA" campaign flyer laced with protectionism and patriotism, Kucinich intones: "NAFTA allows foreign owned companies to challenge our Constitution, our Congress, and our rights to enact American laws."

Those youth who were pro-labor offered boycotts against particular companies as the best means of defending the interests of working people here and in other countries, citing campaigns against Taco Bell and Wal-Mart. Consumer boycotts were seen as the "practical" alternative to organizing the unorganized because residents of the U.S. "are not there" in the countries miserably exploited by sweatshop labor. Boycotts may occasionally serve a useful purpose in conjunction with a strike action, but behind timeless consumer boycotts is a liberal-moralist worldview positing that one corporation is more benevolent than another. This presupposes that capitalism can be made into a humane system and is counterposed to mobilizing the power of labor.

Young Spartacus

Berkeley anti-ROTC protest, April 2001: Spartacists oppose FTAA and NAFTA, call to defend Chinese deformed workers state.

Defend Cuba, China Against Counterrevolution!

Che Guevara probably was the most highly regarded political figure among the youth, though the anarchists would distinguish between the Che before and the one after he was a part of the ruling state apparatus in Cuba. The adulation of Che generally came from a romantic identification with the guerrilla road, i.e., "armed direct action." While opposing imperialism, Che's program was fundamentally elitist, posing a band of intellectuals as leadership for the peasant masses—an isolated, parochial social layer whose primary aspiration is property holding. This program is an obstacle to workers taking power in their own name.

Creutzmann/Zeitenspiegel

Cuban youth celebrate anniversary of victory over U.S. imperialism. Cuban Revolution has meant real gains for workers, peasants, blacks, women.

Edward Said...

(continued from page 3)

by the Israeli government and designated for Zionist settlements. Using the advanced military hardware generously supplied by the U.S., the Israeli juggernaut crushed what existed of a West Bank economy, ravished social institutions and reduced Palestinian collective life to a pre-modern level.

In his 1996 book, *Peace and Its Discontents*, Said eloquently denounced the Palestinian Authority (PA) as a "kingdom of illusions, with Israel firmly in command." He further noted that "a slave mentality prevails among Arab leaders, for whom a favorable reception in Washington is the summit of their political lives." Said would later write, the "peace process" that began in 1993 "has simply re-packaged the occupation, offering a token 18 per cent of the lands seized in 1967 to the corrupt Vichy-like Authority of Arafat, whose mandate has essentially been to police and tax his people on Israel's behalf" (*New Left Review*, September-October 2001).

Said was an uncompromising truth-teller—reminiscent of the late Israel Shahak who was a courageous opponent of the semi-theocratic Zionist state and its bloody repression of the Palestinian people, and a declared enemy of racism, chauvinism and injustice wherever he found it. Both Said and Shahak were fighters against the reactionary features of their own societies. In the same *New Left Review* article cited above, Said wrote of the Palestinian Authority leadership: "Could they not once speak as human beings, rather than third-rate imitations of Kissinger and Rabin?" And he bitterly declared: "The Palestinian people deserve better." It is little wonder that the books of this courageous and independent thinker were banned in the Occupied Territories by the corrupt and venal PA.

Said: A Genuine Humanist

In his fight for Palestinian national rights, Said had many enemies. He had countless times declared his repudiation

Efe

Edward Said with his close friend, Israeli conductor Daniel Barenboim.

AFP

Edward Said tossing a stone over border in celebration of Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, July 2000.

of terrorism in all its forms, whether Palestinian or Israeli. Nevertheless, *Commentary*, that voice of Zionist zealots and die-hard Cold Warriors, in its August 1989 issue ran a calumny on Said titled "Professor of Terror." Just before that, the fascistic Jewish Defense League called him a Nazi and his Columbia office was firebombed.

Said made a family visit to Beirut in 2000, where he also gave a couple of lectures. Earlier that year the Israeli army had conducted a humiliating withdrawal from southern Lebanon after a 22-year occupation that cost some 20,000 lives. Said made a daylong excursion to the area, which included the notorious Khiam prison, built by the Israelis in 1987. Some 8,000 were incarcerated and tortured there under bestial conditions. Next stop was an abandoned border post in an area deserted except for Lebanese visitors who came in large numbers to throw stones of celebration across the still heavily fortified border. Said joined in and cast a pebble.

Unknown to him, a photo was taken that would find its way to Israel and across the Atlantic, where it became the source for a vicious witchhunt. He was showered with hate mail and death threats, a media blitz of defamation, and a campaign to get him fired from Columbia, where he had taught for 38 years. An editorial in the campus *Columbia Daily Spectator* branded Said's pebble throw a "violent act." In a protest letter to the *Spectator*, the New York Spartacus Youth Club wrote:

> "The Zionist rulers hurl not stones but bullets and bombs at innocent civilians.... Israel has repeatedly bombed Lebanese towns and cities, killing thousands and driving hundreds of thousands more from their homes. In 1982, the Israeli rulers orchestrated the massacre of well over a thousand Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. Thousands of Palestinians languish in Israel's torture chambers, and thousands more have been killed by occupation forces in the West Bank and Gaza. But the only 'violence' the Zionist apologists at the *Spectator* see is a stone falling on empty ground in Israel. The Spartacus Youth Club says: Defend the Palestinian people against Zionist state repression! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories!"
>
> —*WV* No. 743, 6 October 2000

The huge blind spot in Said's work was the 1917 Russian Revolution. No single event did more to unleash and shape the struggle for social emancipation in the 20th century. The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former USSR in 1991-92 is an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape, not the least in the Near East. It was precisely the destruction of the Soviet Union, removing a key base of political and financial support to the PLO, that paved the way for the 1993 Oslo accords. In his *New Left Review* (November-December 2003) tribute to Said, left-wing writer Tariq Ali recalled, "When I asked if the year 1917 meant anything to him, he replied without hesitation: 'Yes, the Balfour Declaration'." (Named after the British foreign secretary Arthur James Balfour, the declaration supported the Zionist claim to a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine in order to mobilize Jewish support behind the British in the First World War and stake out Britain's claim to Palestine as war booty.)

Said opposed the dead-end and reactionary programs of nationalism and religion and advocated a binational and secular solution to the Israel/Palestine conflict. In his later years, he recognized that the Palestinian and Hebrew populations were so interpenetrated that he rejected a two-state solution. But as Israel/Palestine, the Balkans and Northern Ireland have demonstrated repeatedly, ***under capitalism*** the only possible outcome to geographically interpenetrated peoples who claim the same land is one nation on top with the others either exterminated, expelled, subjugated or some combination thereof.

The only genuinely democratic resolution requires the conquest of power by the multinational proletariat that has the material interest in the fullest development of all peoples irrespective of nationality. Here the greatest example is that provided by the Russian Revolution, which Said ignored. The Bolshevik Revolution, despite its later bureaucratic degeneration under Stalin, brought unparalleled and all-sided social development and national collaboration to the most oppressed regions of the tsarist empire, like the Caucasus. Likewise, in the Balkans, long a seething cauldron of inter-ethnic bloodshed, the social revolution led by Tito in Yugoslavia laid the foundation for almost 50 years of national peace and social development. The restoration of capitalism in both countries also restored the old nationalist hatreds and murderous "ethnic cleansing," aided and abetted by the imperialist powers.

Said's many books included his much-lauded and controversial 1978 work, *Orientalism*, which, along with several of his other works, attempted to delve into the relationship between culture, domination and imperialism. Adding to the breadth of his interests, Said was also an accomplished pianist and musicologist. In his last years, he took much satisfaction in cofounding with the great musician and fellow iconoclast Daniel Barenboim an orchestra that brought together musicians from both Israel and the Occupied Territories. They named it the *West-East Divan*, after Goethe's greatest collection of poetry, which in turn was inspired by the 14th-century Persian lyric poet Hafiz and his collection of sonnets, *Divan*. Joined by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, they held one of their first workshops in Weimar, the city where Goethe lived, only a few miles from the Buchenwald concentration camp. In an *Atlantic* interview (22 September 1999) Said recalled:

> "My role there was to lead the discussions that we had every other night. The night before we went to Buchenwald I gave a talk, and said, 'Look, if you just go to this and see it as part of the Jewish experience, it's wrong, because it's part of the human experience, which we as human beings have to understand. In other words, universalize it and understand it as a horror that afflicts all of humanity'."

Though not a Marxist, Said stood head and shoulders above the many other intellectuals who dealt with the Near East; he was a genuine humanist. But Said also found himself in an impossible situation: He was at bottom a liberal—an honest and sincere liberal, but a liberal nonetheless—in a situation where liberalism could offer no realizable solutions. We owe him a great debt and would do well to learn from both his weaknesses as well as his strengths. ■

Some anarchist youth we talked to defended Cuba and the gains of its revolution (e.g., education, health care) but did not like Castro, whom they considered an authoritarian. A group of youth asked about the dollarization of Cuba out of justified concern over the threat to the Cuban Revolution. Indeed, making U.S. tender legal opened a breach in the state monopoly of foreign trade, a serious danger making the Cuban deformed workers state more susceptible to capitalist forces. This has sharply increased social divisions, particularly affecting women and black Cubans.

The Cuban Revolution has survived decades of CIA plots, a U.S. blockade and imperialist economic penetration. Miami itself is a haven for the *gusanos*, the counterrevolutionary Cubans who fled the 1959 Revolution. In fact, the stretch of Biscayne Boulevard where much of the anti-FTAA protests took place was renamed Jorge Mas Canosa Boulevard, after one of the more vicious historic *gusano* leaders.

Although the Cuban workers state was deformed from the outset by the rule of the nationalist Castro bureaucracy and the absence of the proletariat in the revolution, the smashing of capitalist class rule in 1960-61 has enabled the Cuban masses to make great strides forward in their living conditions. The restoration of capitalism would bring many horrors to the people of Cuba and would further embolden U.S. imperialism in exploiting the peoples of Latin America, more than any "free trade" agreement could ever do.

It is part of our struggle against imperialist capitalism that we stand for the unconditional military defense of Cuba, China, North Korea and Vietnam—the remaining deformed workers states—against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution. Simultaneously, we call for workers political revolution to oust the sellout Stalinist bureaucrats and fight to extend proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries.

World socialist revolution is the prerequisite to raising the productive forces of society to a level where material scarcity is eliminated. Opposition to trade between nations leads either to support for protectionism or to primitivist economic decentralization and isolation, programs that would exacerbate the differences between the industrial and the underdeveloped worlds. It is only through centralized planning on an international scale, based on global exchange terms favorable to underdeveloped nations, that the divide separating the impoverished of the world from the wealthy of this country can be overcome. The way forward is to build a revolutionary party that can infuse the working class with an understanding of its historic task to overturn the imperialist order and reorganize society on an egalitarian socialist basis. ■

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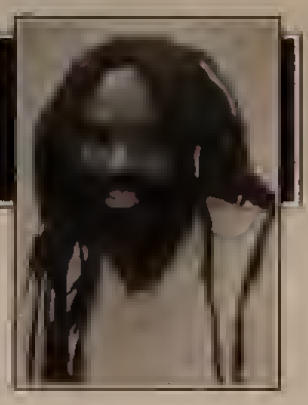
From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



"Good Police Procedure" in Cin. City

"Here we go again," laments a Cincinnati religious leader as local and national TV stations broadcast the harrowing footage of cops beating a black man, striking him with long truncheons perhaps two dozen times.

The Rev. Damon Lynch, Jr., pastor of New Jerusalem Baptist Church, is not alone in that sentiment.

Cincinnati is hut the latest of a long train of abuses. this latest is based on that often-used pretext: "the Big N----- Defense."

It was used in the infamous beating of Rodney King in L.A. (one of the eops charged spiced up the imagery hy likening him to a "gorilla"). A decade before Rodney King hecame a household name, a man named Delhert Africa was beaten, rifle-hutted, and repeatedly kicked while giving up after the 1978 Phila. police assault on the home and headquarters of the MOVE Organization.

Initially, the city's police chief denied Africa was beaten (in fact, all the men were heaten that day) but the videotapes made it difficult to disprove Delbert's pummeling.

When a trial took place, the cops took the stand to announce they were in fear of Delbert hecause of his muscles. (The judge would dismiss the jury and proclaim them "not guilty," *ignoring videotape evidence!*)

Now, a man named Nathaniel Jones is beaten to a pulp on tape in Cincinnati. When he dies, the first thing the corporate media proclaims is bis size. On some early reports, Mr. Jones was described as "nearly 400 pounds."

It took a day or so to shrink to around 350 lhs. Still, we see the rudiments of the BND: "Big N----- Defense." Six cops, each armed with a variety of weapons, were threatened by the BND syndrome.

Of course, almost predictably, drugs have been introduced into the case.

If it were not so tragic, it would he almost comical. One is reminded of a stand-up routine by comedian Dave Chappelle. He describes cops heating a Black person into the concrete. The cops get together, and one tells the other, "OK—let's just sprinkle some crack on 'em, and get outta here."

The line never fails to score laughs from the audience.

It is so deep in American consciousness, that it's become a national, private joke.

It is a joke that stems from something deadly serious. And it stems from a national problem that shows no signs of abatement.

For far too many men and women, it is no laughing matter.

There is not a social explosion in the last half of the 20th Century that did not stem from events of just this nature. From Watts of 1965 to Los Angeles of 1992, the trigger has been the same—police violence against Black people. Courts have issued judgments up into the billions (in total), hut to no avail.

Like cancer, it goes on and on...and on.

It matters not a whit what color the police chief, or mayor is.

It matters not whether tbere is a police accountability board or not.

It matters not whether there is a Repuhlican or Democratie Administration in power, nationally, or loeally.

How many politicians, whether they are running for president or dog catcher, have raised the issue? How many have olfered anything close to a solution?

The solution will not come from City Hall. Indeed, often, City Hall is the prohlem!

The solution will eome from the people themselves, who organize themselves to make a difference, directly.

Our history provides many examples of average, everyday people, organized to ehange social problems.

That time has come again.

7 December 2003

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Send urgently needed contributions for Jamal's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" and earmarked for "Mumia" to: Cnmmittee tn Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

If you wish to correspnnd with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Padilla...

(continued from page 2)

seized upon the Oklahoma City homhing to pass the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, the Bush administration seized upon the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. What the Bush administration is seeking to do is to make its array of repressive laws and measures permanent features of the American legal system.

When the government has allowed such legal niceties as lawyers and trials, several of their "anti-terrorism" prosecutions have faltered. In October, a federal judge harred the government from seeking the death penalty against Al Qaeda supporter Zacarias Moussaoui or arguing that Moussaoui was involved in the Septemher 11 attacks based on the prosecution's refusal to let the defense have access to detainees who could exonerate him. And on December 16, a federal judge in Detroit formally admonished Asheroft for violating a "gag" order during the trial last spring of four memhers of an alleged Islamic terrorist "sleeper cell." Despite Asheroft's efforts, one defendant was acquitted and another was found guilty only of document fraud. Based on the government's withholding of evidence helpful to the defense, the judge also indicated he might order a new trial.

Last summer, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee suhmitted an *amici curiae* (friends of the court) hrief on Padilla's behalf, warning that through his detention the government is asserting nothing less than the right to *disappear* citizens. "If the imperial President is upheld," we wrote, "Padilla's detention threatens to become the Dred Scott case of our time, a declaration that 'Citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect'." The "war on terror" has served as the pretext not only for U.S. imperialism's homhing of Afghanistan and hloody occupation of Iraq, hut also for a war on the population at home. As we pointed out in our brief, the "war on terror" is "in fact not a military conflict but a political agenda." It is no more a real shooting war than is a "war on evil" or a "war on cancer."

While at first directed mainly at immigrants, particularly Arabs and Muslims, the "war on terror" is also taking aim at minorities, blacks, lahor and all perceived opponents of the government's policies. When the contract for longshoremen on the West Coast was ahout to expire in 2002, Tom Ridge, Bush's head of Homeland Security, called the union president warning that a strike could threaten "national security." The government's ohjective is to smear and chill dissent and political action.

In the end, what the capitalist ruling class can get away with will be determined by class struggle. In ruling that the government could not hold Padilla, a U.S. citizen, as an "enemy combatant," the Court of Appeals relied largely on a 1970 federal statute, 18 U.S.C. § 4001(a), known as the Non-Detention Act, which declares that "No citizen shall be imprisoned or otherwise detained by the United States except pursuant to an Act of Congress." As we wrote in our Padilla brief, the Non-Detention Act is itself a gain of the tumultuous social struggles of the 1960s: "Section 4001(a)'s clear, straightforward disavowal of Presidential imperial power to detain citizens without lawful authority is the sole legislative constraint on the Executive's police power to come out of the hrief period of expansion of judicial recognition of democratic rights during the civil rights movement and Vietnam War period." The brief documents how the modern notion of eitizenship is itself "the cumulative product of not only the American Revolution, but the bloody hattlefields of the Civil War and the elass and social struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries." We explain that "the rights of citizenship are reversible in the context of social reaction. With the decline of the social struggles of the 1960s, and particularly with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the American hourgeoisie has taken aim at the rights gained through those earlier struggles."

Our Padilla brief has struck a responsive chord among trade unionists, immigrants, blacks and leftists who understand that they will he the victims of the government's all-sided attacks on civil liberties. Some union locals have ordered multiple copies of the hrief, such as Chicago's American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3506, which recently wrote to the PDC: "This attack on Jose Padilla represents an attack on every one of us. If they can make unsuhstantiated charges, imprison him, and deprive him of his rights, they can do the same to any of us. Keep up your good work!" What is necessary is to mobilize labor's social power in defense of immigrants, which requires tearing through the lie of "national unity" promoted by the American capitalist rulers and breaking down the poisonous racial and ethnic divisions they promote to weaken the labor movement and maintain their rule. *Down with the gavernment's "war on terror"! Free the detainees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!* ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
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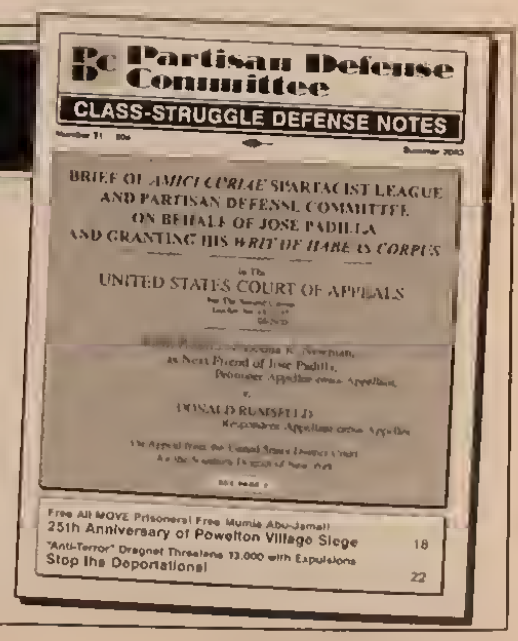


UFCW...

(continued from page 12)

7,000 Indianapolis UFCW Local 700 members are working under an indefinite contract extension. In Chicago, 9,000 workers in UFCW Locals 1546 and 881 at Safeway-owned Dominick's face contract negotiations beginning this month; in November 2002, the workers overwhelmingly voted down a rotten contract from Safeway despite the fact that the union allowed the company to literally hus the workers to the contract vote in an attempt to intimidate them into a "yes" vote. Meanwhile, in Seattle the UFCW has just hegun contract negotiations. What is needed is a solid strike by all UFCW workers against every Vons/Safeway, Albertsons and Ralphs/Krogers across the country.

Break with the Democrats!

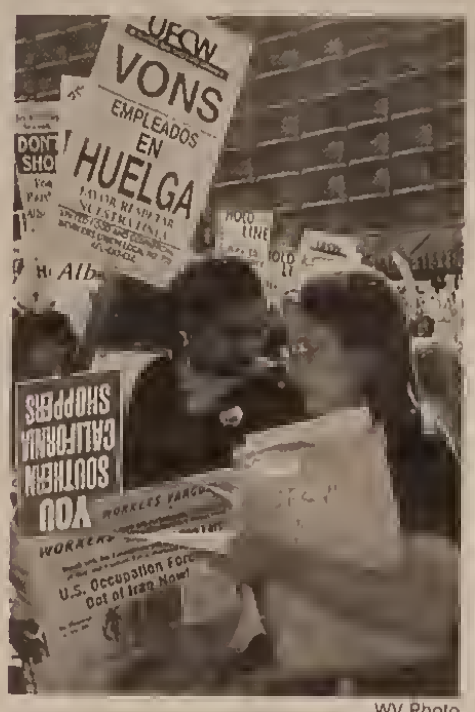
The UFCW has been part of a campaign urging consumers not to shop at Safeway. Picketers from Southern California have been sent north to man "informational picket lines" at Safeway stores. Cynically proclaiming "Supermarket strike spreads to No. California stores," the bureaucrats have pushed a "shop out" as a diversion from effective picket lines at all the distribution points in the south and from the extension of the strike north by shutting down Safeway and Albertsons throughout the state. (UFCW workers in the Bay Area, whose contract is up on September 11, are divided into eight separate locals. Local 588, representing 30,000 workers in the rest of Northern California, has a contract expiration date of July 7.) A 1 January article in the San Diego *Union-Tribune* quotes Greg Denier, a UFCW official, saying, "We will begin asking UFCW members in stores outside of Southern California to honor the picket lines." However, the article added that Denier "would not say when that would happen." As the strike moves into its third month, what are the bureaucrats waiting for?!

While the UFCW and AFL-CIO tops have simply been paying lip service in urging consumers not to shop at Safeway, workers leafletting both Safeway and Albertsons in the Bay Area are actually serious about implementing this tactic. Consumer boycotts, which appeal to consumers of all classes, are no substitute for effective strike action, where workers can use their concentrated power to cut off the profits of the employers, and in the absence of a strike are always a losing strategy. However, in conjunction with the active picket lines at the stores in the south, a boycott of these supermarket chains is a measure of support for the strike. We call on everyone to boycott Safeway (and its subsidiary Pak N Save) and Albertsons as an elementary act of solidarity with the UFCW strikers, whether there are pickets at the stores or not.

As Sweeney was speaking from the podium at the December 16 rally, a Ralphs worker yelled out, "You never should have taken us away from Ralphs." Ralphs workers are still reeling over the betrayal by the leaders who took down their pickets at Ralphs and have grotesquely told consumers to support the union by shopping there, even as the workers are locked out! Reportedly, the Ralphs picketers have been sent to man the "informational lines" in the north. What the UFCW should do is spread the strike to Northern California and re-establish the picket lines at Ralphs.

For its part, Ralphs is now hiring scabs—who today are euphemistically called "replacement workers." It is notable that the company they have employed to get their scabs is Personnel Support Systems Inc., owned by one Clifford L. Nuckols, a professional strikebreaker and convicted felon. A *Los Angeles Times* (19 December 2003) article quotes a Teamsters warehouse worker aptly describing Personnel Support and its scabs as "locusts": "They fly in, destroy the good jobs and then fly out to do it again somewhere else. This is the equivalent of hired guns in the olden days." The article described how an employee at one of the hotels where Nuckols' scabs are housed complained that they are "volatile and that fights broke out regularly." Cops had to he called to the hotel housing some of the scabs to investigate a rape allegation made by one of the female scabs against one of the male scabs.

In the face of such vicious thugs, what is needed is mass union mobilizations and strong picket lines that no one and nothing crosses. Ever since the defeat of the 1981 PATCO air traffic controllers strike, when President Reagan personally



WV Photo

***Workers Vanguard* salesman at UFCW strike rally and march, December 16.**

fired the entire workforce and had it replaced with a massive scab operation, it has become common for the labor tops to accept massive scabbing as a "normal" part of strikes. Behind the bureaucrats' treachery is their fealty to bourgeois legality and capitalist politicians, particularly in the Democratic Party. The labor fakers' allegiance to the Democrats and a mythical alliance between labor and capital means that the real interests of workers and the oppressed (such as jobs for all at the highest union wages and benefits, free, quality health care and integrated education for all) are sacrificed on the altar of class collaboration with the profit-hungry bosses.

The Democratic Party, no less than the Republican Party, is a capitalist party, which cannot serve the interests of workers. For example, the recent strike by L.A. transit mechanics was knifed by the hureaucrats in partnership with Democrats like City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa. The transit workers went on strike mainly to defend health care benefits, but they went back to work with their benefits in the hands of a pro-company "mediation" committee! Break with the Democratic Party!

The developments in the grocery strike, as well as the betrayal hy the union leaders in the scuttled L.A. transit strike, illustrate that the trade-union bureaucracy is an obstacle in the path of workers struggles going forward. It is little wonder that with the mechanics strike knifed, L.A. bus drivers just voted—with a turnout of only 344 out of 5,000 workers—to approve their contract without having gone out on strike.

The task of building a fighting, class-struggle labor movement—mohilized in defense of its own interests and the interests of blacks, immigrants, and all the oppressed—is at bottom a political question. Workers in the U.S. today are faced with not only a stagnating economy but a war-crazed and viciously anti-labor administration in the White House. Such a difficult situation only further underscores the importance of having the right leadership to carry out the necessary struggles.

The starting point for such a leadership must be the understanding that capitalist society is divided between two antagonistic classes: workers, who produce all material value in society and are forced to sell their labor power in order to survive, and the capitalist class that exploits lahor for profit. The interests of these two classes are irreconcilahly counterposed. Class peace between the oppressed and the oppressors is precisely the goal of the labor officials, from the national AFL-CIO's Sweeney on down to Santangelo and UFCW Local 770's Rick Icaza. As we wrote at the time of the UPS strike in 1997:

> "The class traitors who currently run the unions long ago separated themselves from their working-class base. In the words of early American socialist leader Daniel De Leon, the top union officials serve as the 'labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.' So strong are the bureaucrats' ties to the capitalist order that they have renounced the very means by which the unions were built. Those unions were built in *opposition* to the bosses' cops and courts. Leaders, then, went to prison and died for the union cause. Strikes were virtual wars. Now the union tops call for 'informational' picket lines, impotent consumer boycotts, moral witness 'protests' at stockholder meetings, corporate campaigns...anything except the hard class struggle that is necessary to win even in defensive battles."
>
> —*Workers Vanguard* Supplement, 27 August 1997

What is necessary is a class-struggle leadership of the unions hased on political independence of the labor movement from the bosses' state and political parties. Militant grocery workers who want to fight for better health care and a decent future must link the fight against their sellout bureaucrats to the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party—a party that starts from the proposition that there is no such thing as a "fair" profit, that all profit is extracted through the exploitation of labor; a party that understands that to eliminate union-busting, unemployment, racism and war requires a socialist revolution.

Only the proletariat has the power and objective class interest to overthrow capitalism. Workers produce the wealth of society, they should run society! Only the international rule of the working class can lay the basis for the elimination of all scarcity and open the door for humanity to move forward into a classless communist society of abundance. This is the program that the Spartacist League fights for.

For a Fighting Workers Party!

Tailing the "labor lieutenants of capital" are a variety of self-styled "socialists" who have no revolutionary program to offer workers seeking an alternative to the pro-capitalist program of the union leaders. Such reformist groups include the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Workers World Party (WWP) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which all help to promote the illusions pushed by the trade-union bureaucracy.

The ISO lavishes praise on Miguel Contreras, writing that "Miguel Contreras, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, has played a crucial role in mobilizing solidarity" (*Socialist Worker*, 12 December 2003). Contreras' "crucial role" was in brokering the sellout deal between ATU head Neil Silver and liberal Democratic MTA board member Antonio Villaraigosa that stabbed all the transit workers in the back.

In the same article, the ISO alihis the UFCW tops' treacherous decision to take down the picket lines at all Ralphs stores as a "strategic blunder." But this decision was no mistake. It logically flows from the UFCW bureaucrats' program of narrowing, rather than extending, strike action and their helief in class collaboration: the notion that workers can unite with some mythical "good" capitalists against the "had" capitalists. The ISO caters to the liberal view that it is possible to have a non-greedy (i.e., more humane) capitalist system, if only "nice" people were running it.

During the grocery strike, ISOers have actively engaged in "disruptive shopping," consciously crossing picket lines and entering struck stores! In a letter to the editor printed in *Socialist Worker* (21 Novemher 2003), one Justin Akers reports, "Members of the International Socialist Organization and other lahor supporters engaged in what has come to be called 'disruptive shopping.' After informing the picketers that we were entering the store, ahout a dozen or so activists filled up shopping baskets to the hrim and then simultaneously occupied each checkout stand." Crossing picket lines is nothing new for the ISO. For example, during the 1996 New York City Service Employees International Union Local 32B-32J strike, ISO members crossed picket lines outside the New School for Social Research in downtown Manhattan in order to hold one of their advertised weekly meetings.

Likewise, the reformist SWP ran an article on the UFCW strike favorably characterizing a rally co-organized by the left Latin American nationalists of Conciencia Libre at UCLA, which ended with "disruptive shopping," as "a pro-UFCW protest inside a Ralphs store near the campus" (*Militant*, 17 Novemher 2003). The fact that the ISO and others are carrying out such actions with the consent of the bureaucrats only further underlines how they go along with the labor tops in eroding workers' consciousness and undermining the basic trade-union principle that *picket lines mean don't cross*.

WWP, another reformist outfit, has intervened into the grocery strike in order to more thoroughly line up workers hehind treacherous union misleaders. WWP staunchly supported the UFCW tops' pulling down of the pickets at Ralphs. Outrageously, in an article titled "Solidarity Shifts Balance Toward Union" (*Workers World*, 20 November 2003), WWP writes, "On Oct. 31, the union pulled its pickets from Ralphs stores to focus on Safeway and Albertsons. The tactic seems to have worked.... The picket lines are now larger and more effective, as a result."

WWP alibis the bureaucrats' taking down of the picket lines at Ralphs by claiming that "exploiting bitter rivalries among Ralphs, Albertsons, and Vons (Safeway) could be an effective tactic" (*Workers World*, 6 November 2003). The bureaucrats' rationale for this betrayal was in pari to split the supermarket bosses and win a separate agreement with Ralphs. Predictahly, this exploded in their face when it was revealed that Ralphs has a deal to share its profits with the other supermarket hosses! The supermarket bosses are united against the unions. The unions must unite against the bosses in order to bring the maximum power to hear and actually win. It is the trade-union bureaucracy that is undermining that power.

Why do these groups tail after the trade-union bureaucracy? The reason is that they acquiesce to what is possible or "practical" under capitalism. The reformists, precisely because they oppose the struggle for workers revolution, reinforce the illusion that the Democratic Party can be pressured to serve the interests of the oppressed and that class collaboration can really work to bring concessions to workers. Nothing could be further from the truth. Where the reformists see allies in the pro-capitalist union tops and Democrats, in reality these are obstacles to advancing the interests of workers and the oppressed. We in the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club focus our efforts to politically arm the workers so they can forge a leadership that will fight.

The ongoing UFCW strike is a major class battle for American workers today. Its victory or failure could affect the conditions of millions of workers in the U.S., not least in regard to the vital issue of health care. Militant workers must draw the necessary political lessons from this strike. We must learn the lessons about the nature of the bosses, the capitalist state and government, and the trade-union misleaders. To go forward, workers must fight for a leadership based on a program of militant struggle against the entire capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Ahove all, what is needed is a revolutionary workers party that fights for a workers government. ***Those who labor must rule!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Vons Pickets Defy Bureaucrats' Sabotage

Build Picket Lines! Extend UFCW Strike!

WV Photos

Shut Down All Distribution Centers!

Left: 5,000-strong UFCW strike rally and march in Los Angeles joined by Teamsters and other unionists on December 16. Right: Militant pickets defy union tops' instructions to take down picket lines at El Monte Vons distribution center, December 23.

LOS ANGELES, January 6—70,000 UFCW grocery workers in Southern California are now in their third month on the picket lines in a popular strike. They are holding strong in the struggle for the survival of their union and the fight to maintain company-paid health care benefits as well as the protection of current wage, benefit and pension scales for future UFCW members. As most workers are keenly aware, the effects of the outcome of this strike will be felt nationwide. A 17 December article in the *New York Times* quotes UCLA professor Harley Shaiken, who aptly said, "All the tensions and fears about health care that run through the larger society are there in spades on the picket line." But the workers have had to contend with the treacherous policies of the union misleaders who cringe before the bosses' laws and bow down to Democratic Party politicians.

On November 24, picket lines were finally put up at all the distribution centers for the Vons, Albertsons and Ralphs supermarket chains, and Teamsters employed at these locations honored the lines. This was a necessary step to extend and strengthen the strike. However, as we noted at the time, thousands of scab trucks were still allowed in and out of the distribution centers, defeating the whole purpose of the picket line. We wrote: "Picketing the distribution centers should not be just a temporary pressure tactic for the holidays; nothing should move until the UFCW strike ends in victory.... What's necessary is to mobilize mass, militant UFCW and Teamsters pickets at the distribution centers to *stop all scabbing!*" (*WV* No. 815, 5 December 2003).

But three weeks later, on December 19, the UFCW and Teamsters leadership announced that they would take down picket lines at the distribution centers and send the Teamsters ranks back to work as a "good faith gesture" to the supermarket bosses, appealing to Ralphs and Albertsons to end the lockout they declared after the strike began at Vons. The UFCW also offered up a deal which included $350-$500 million in health care concessions by the union. But the supermarket bosses, gunning for a full *$1 billion* in concessions, rejected the union's offer. They smell blood and want nothing less than to bust the UFCW as it is, to turn it into an irrelevant organization incapable of defending its members. They want to deal with the workers they employ much like the notorious anti-union outfit Wal-Mart deals with its employees: low wages, token benefits, no work rules, victimization of actively pro-union workers. On the other hand, a UFCW victory would go a long way to helping unionize Wal-Mart.

Conscious of the threat against their union and their livelihoods, UFCW workers at the El Monte Vons distribution center on December 22 defied their own rotten leadership. They militantly refused to take down their picket line; in solidarity Teamsters drivers, while not manning the lines, have refused to cross. One Vons warehouse worker told *WV*: "They told us to picket at the stores, but we don't work at the stores. We work here, and we're not leaving!" These workers understand that taking down the lines can only spell defeat for the UFCW. Many Teamsters see this struggle as their own, as the outcome of this strike will affect them in two years when their contract with the grocery bosses expires and they face the threat of being replaced by "independent" non-union truckers. These workers have a fundamental sense of the trade-union solidarity needed to defeat the bosses, a solidarity which the union bureaucrats have undermined at every juncture in this strike. In carrying out such betrayals, the bureaucrats are acting as the political police of the bosses inside the labor movement.

When the UFCW pickets went up at the distribution centers in November, Jim Santangelo, president of Teamsters Joint Council 42, declared, "We either end this thing together or we die together." But only a few weeks later, in an attempt to explain the treacherous decision to send the Teamsters back to work, Santangelo said, "Say we were out for another two months. What is it doing? How is it helping?" These obviously contradictory statements reflect the utterly cynical outlook of the labor bureaucrats who clearly never had any intention of actually shutting down the distribution centers by stopping the scabs in order to win the strike. Workers clearly have the power and determination to win, but they are hampered by a rotten leadership.

On December 23, the UFCW released a statement declaring: "As a result of the corporations' stubborn and ill-advised stance, which the unions continue to believe to be driven by the corporate greed of Safeway CEO Steve Burd, the unions announced today that the picket lines would remain up at Safeway distribution centers and warehouse facilities." Santangelo was quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* (23 December 2003) as saying, "I told my guys...'As long as those lines are up, you will not cross,' and they have no problem with that." The reality is the other way around! The union leaders only authorized this action after feeling the heat from the ranks. One worker told *WV*, "We did this action and then the *L.A. Times* makes it seem like it was the tops who did it." The removal of the picket lines from the Ralphs and Albertsons warehouses is a betrayal by both the UFCW and Teamsters bureaucrats.

AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and 150 leaders of UFCW locals from across the U.S. and Canada had a strategizing session on December 16 in Century City, Los Angeles. There was a spirited, 5,000-strong march and rally following this meeting with contingents of Teamsters and other unionists. When asked what is necessary to win the strike, one worker said, "Shut the state down." Another worker said the strike "should have been extended on a national level." That's right!

But the only "strategy" Sweeney and the UFCW leadership came up with was the threat of calling for a future one-day national consumer boycott of Safeway. The bureaucrats have isolated UFCW locals facing the supermarket giants in each region of the country. When UFCW workers struck in West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, the bureaucrats brought them back to work under a contract with health care concessions to the bosses. In Arizona, UFCW workers have been working despite the fact that their contract expired on October 25. Similarly, more than

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 818

23 January 2004

Brazil

Lula's Popular Front Turns Screws on Workers

No to Class Collaboration! For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Top: Tens of thousands of Brazilian workers demonstrate in June 2003 against Lula government's threatened pension cuts, enacted in December. Inset: Lula greets imperialist overseer George Bush.

The following article was written by our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.

Once one of Latin America's most famous labor leaders, the former metal worker Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva is now president of Brazil and has for the last year been thoroughly fulfilling all the promises he made... to the Brazilian capitalists and their imperialist overlords. Lula's government has used its immense authority over the workers movement to impose many of the demands made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the impoverished Brazilian population, something his forerunners couldn't achieve.

Lula's Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT —Workers Party) was born out of dramatic workers struggles against the military dictatorship in the late 1970s and founded in February 1980. When Lula was elected president in 2002, many workers in Brazil believed one of their own had finally risen to power and would represent their interests. But their aspirations have been dashed. The coalition that brought Lula to power is an example of what the Stalinists call a "popular front," but what we Marxists know to be a class-collaborationist coalition in which one or more workers parties joins bourgeois forces to rule on behalf of the capitalists.

In this case, the main mass workers party, the PT, along with the two sizable Communist Parties, the old Stalinists of the PCB and the formerly pro-Albania PCdoB, made an alliance with the Liberal Party of José Alencar, owner of Brazil's largest textile conglomerate, Coteminas. Alencar's Liberal Party is not just some bourgeois formation; it is the political front for a "born-again" outfit, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, which, predictably, is opposed to abortion and gay rights.

Lula explained his alliance with Alencar, stating: "It will make it possible to symbolize for the first time the union of labor with the representative of capital, in a perspective of making in this country a new social contract, a new relationship in Brazilian society" (*O Estado de São Paulo*, 22 June 2002). In reality, this is not the "first time" the PT has sought such a nationalist, class-collaborationist union

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U.S. Government Declares All Airline Passengers "Terror Risks"

Big Brother in the Skies

The Bush administration thinks it has found a way to realize its Orwellian dream of a giant database that can track every detail about your private life, from your medical records and financial status to what books you read. An attempt last year to launch such a "data mining" program, initially dubbed Total Information Awareness, was scuttled amid a huge public outcry. Now, it is being reintroduced in the guise of protecting airline travelers against terrorist attack. This government scheme represents a wholesale assault on the very concept of personal privacy.

Under the sinister new program, called CAPPS II (Computer Assisted Passenger Pre-Screening System), the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will investigate airline passengers by tapping into commercial databases containing a wide range of personal information. It will then compare this data with secret intelligence lists on suspected "terrorists" and outstanding criminal arrest warrants. To get a sense of how many people will be swept up in this all-sided dragnet, consider that domestic airlines carried 612 million passengers last year!

CAPPS II computers will "tease out relationships" from this mass of personal data based on the concept, as reported by *Air Safety Week* (29 September 2003), that "deviations from normal behavior point to terrorists"! Passengers will be divided into three color-coded categories: green for those who are approved, yellow for those facing "additional scrutiny" and red meaning the cops are going to drag you off. TSA chief James Loy estimates that 3 to 4

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Depraved Arkansas Execution

The 2004 killing season on America's death row opened this year with a particularly gruesome twist in the already cruel and barbaric practice of legalized state murder. On January 6, Charles Singleton was killed by the state of Arkansas, by lethal injection, as is now standard practice. However, since Singleton was mentally disturbed and the U.S. Supreme Court has barred executing the mentally ill, the state first forcibly drugged him with powerful antipsychotic medications to make him supposedly sane enough to be killed. But the 44-year-old man, who had been in prison since he was 19 years old, went to his death still hearing voices. The governor refused to commute his sentence despite massive controversy over the case, including petitions from the European Union and Amnesty International, among others.

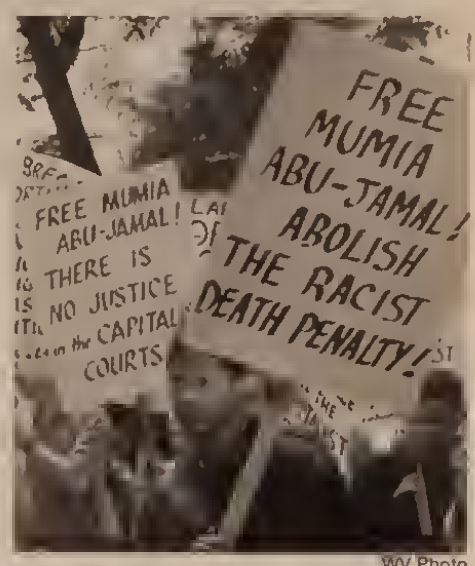
Last October the U.S. Supreme Court opened the way for the state murder machine's deranged and sadistic new drugging policy by letting stand an earlier ruling by a federal appeals court in St. Louis that prison officials can forcibly medicate mentally ill prisoners explicitly in order to kill them. Federal appeals Judge Roger Wollman's chilling rationale stated that courts need not consider the ultimate result of drugging prisoners, since the medications were generally beneficial—except for one little thing: "Eligibility for execution is the only unwanted consequence of the medication" (*New York Times*, 11 February 2003). Since the American Medical Association's ethical guidelines forbid doctors from medicating people in order to execute them, this opens the way for untrained prison guards to massively dope up their helpless prisoners.

Meanwhile, in another grisly execution, on January 14 a condemned man in Ohio put up a desperate fight, screaming "please God, help me," as six guards manhandled him onto a gurney and strapped him down for his lethal injection—all in view of his mother, who had to be taken out in a wheelchair after her struggling son, Lewis Williams Jr., was finally declared dead. Williams had been on death row for two decades and always insisted he was innocent. The U.S. Supreme Court turned down his final appeal, which argued that lethal injection was in fact cruel and unusual punishment and therefore unconstitutional. The day before Williams was killed, another prisoner, Tyrone P. Darks, was executed in Oklahoma on January 13. He too had appealed to the Supreme Court against the state's use of lethal drugs, and was also rejected.

Growing evidence that killing by lethal injection is not the "humane" death prison officials claim, along with evidence, including from DNA testing, that has proven the innocence of over a hundred death row prisoners, has left even some capitalist politicians queasy and shaken. The lethal three-drug "Texas Cocktail" administered to prisoners by most of the 38 states with the death penalty includes a drug which the American Veterinary Medical Association condemns for use on animals because of its ability to mask hideous suffering while completely paralyzing its victim. In fact, in 2001 the state of Tennessee declared it a crime for vets to use the chemical pancuronium bromide, or Pavulon, to euthanize pets. "They're saying I'm less than an animal," said a Tennessee death row prisoner, Abu-Ali Abdur'Rahman, who has challenged the state's use of the paralyzing agent in its deadly drug mixture.

Human beings are put to death by a three-chemical sequence: first, an ultra-short-acting sodium thiopental shot, effective for only minutes and used to induce anesthesia. Next comes the Pavulon, a paralyzing agent which relaxes muscles so the strapped-down prisoner appears eerily serene and unmoving. Third comes the lethal potassium chloride, which stops the heart and causes intense pain if the victim is still conscious. "It would basically deliver the maximum amount of pain the veins can deliver, which is a lot," testified an anesthesiologist and Columbia professor on behalf of Abdur'Rahman's appeal. A woman who underwent eye surgery in which Pavulon was used to paralyze the eye testified that her anesthesia was ineffective, so she was awake and in hideous agony for hours of surgery, but completely unable to move or signal her doctors. It was "worse than death," she said.

When Democrat Bill Clinton first ran for president, he took time off his campaign to oversee, as then-governor of Arkansas, the execution of Rickey Ray Rector, a brain-damaged black man. The barbaric excesses of racist America achieve their most concentrated form in the prison system, swollen to mammoth size, and in the legal lynching of prisoners, a legacy of the Old South slave system. Of the over 3,000 prisoners on death row, almost half are black. Witness the case of former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and Philadelphia journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, still fighting for his freedom despite mountains of evidence—including a sworn confession from the actual killer—proving his innocence. As Jamal's continued presence on death row so starkly demonstrates, one cannot expect justice from America's capitalist courts. And as these depraved and sadistic executions show, there is no "fair," "sane" or "humane" way to slaughter prisoners, many of whom have spent their entire adult lives penned into tiny cages at the total mercy of the prison system. We are in principle opposed to the racist death penalty for the guilty as well as the innocent. We stand for the abolition of the entire prison system—the creation of a deranged capitalist system which requires it to maintain exploitation and racial oppression. ■



WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated Revolutionary Contingent at May 2001 rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal in San Francisco.

TROTSKY

LENIN

For the Communism of Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht!

We honor this month V.I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, who died in January 1924, and Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, leaders of the revolutionary wing of the German Social Democracy and founders of the Spartakusbund and its successor, the German Communist Party. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered, amidst a revolutionary upheaval in Germany, on 19 January 1919 by military reactionaries working with the Social Democratic government. The following appeal, "To the Workers and Soldiers of the Allied Countries," was issued by Liebknecht upon his release from prison in October 1918, shortly before the end of World War I, after serving over two years for agitation against the war.

Friends, Comrades, Brothers! From under the blows of the world war, amidst the ruin which has been created by Tzarist Imperialist society—the Russian Proletariat erected its State—the Socialist Republic of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers. This was created in spite of an attitude of misconception, hatred and calumny. This republic represents the greatest basis for that universal socialist order, the creation of which is at the present time the historic task of the International Proletariat. The Russian revolution was to an unprecedented degree the cause of the proletariat of the whole world becoming more revolutionary. Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary are already in the throes of revolution; revolution is awakening in Germany. But there are obstacles in the way of the victory of the German proletariat. The mass of the German people are with us, the power of the accursed enemies of the working class has collapsed; but they are nevertheless making all attempts to deceive the people, with a view of protracting the hour of the liberation of the German people. The robbery and violence of German Imperialism in Russia, as well as the violent Brest-Litovsk peace and the Bucharest peace have consolidated and strengthened the Imperialists of the Allied countries;—and this is the reason why the German Government are endeavouring to utilise the Allied attack upon Socialist Russia for the purpose of retaining power. You have no doubt heard how Wilhelm II, who, now that Tzarism has perished, is the representative of the basest form of reaction,—a few days ago made use of intervention in the affairs of proletarian Russia by the Allied Empires for the purpose of raising a new war agitation amongst the working masses. We must not permit our ignoble enemies to make use of any democratic means and institutions for their purpose: the proletariat of the Allied countries must allow no such thing to occur. We know that you have already raised your voice to protest against the machinations of your governments, but the danger is growing ever greater and greater. A united front of world Imperialism against the proletariat is being realised, in the first instance, in the struggle against the Russian Soviet Republic. This is what I warn you against. The proletariat of the world must not allow the flame of the Socialist Revolution to be extinguished, or all its hopes and all its powers will perish. The failure of the Russian Socialist Republic will be the defeat of the proletariat of the whole world. Friends, comrades, brothers arise against your rulers! Long live the Russian workers, soldiers and peasants! Long live the Revolution of the French, English and American proletariat! Long live the liberation of the workers of all countries from the infernal chasm of war, exploitation and slavery!

—Karl Liebknecht, "The Last Message of Karl Liebknecht,"
The Communist International, Vol. 1, No. 4 (August 1919)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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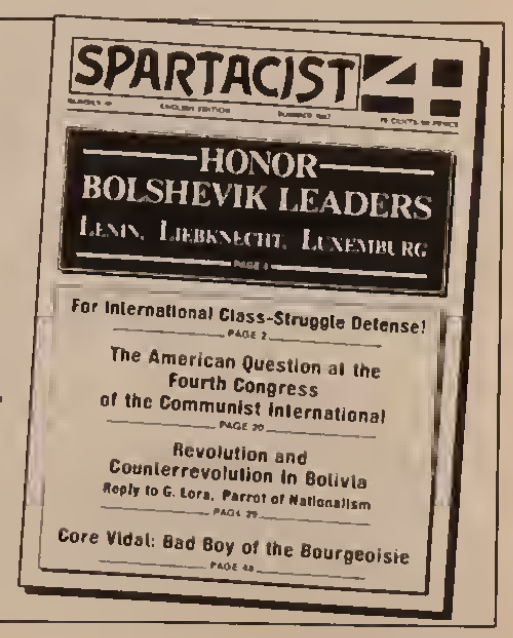


Racism and Capitalist Counterrevolution

Moscow Foreign Student Dorm Fire Kills 43

On 24 November 2003, at just past 2:00 in the morning, Moscow's frozen night lit up into a portal of hell. Fire swept through Dormitory No. 6 of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (PFUR). The foreign student residents of the five-story building awoke to smoke, flames and the screams of neighbors running for their lives. They were trapped. Two of the three stairwells were locked, many of the windows were barred, and the only exit descended right into the source of the fire on the second floor. Cries for help in the languages of 39 countries rang out through broken windows. Soon the students themselves jumped, many aflame and falling to their deaths. Fire trucks and emergency services took up to an *hour* to arrive. A Cameroonian student from an adjacent dorm described the horror: "There were people jumping from windows who fell right at my feet. It was awful. We helped carry the injured to other buildings, but the ambulances took too long to take them away. There was a Vietnamese girl who died in front of my eyes."

Forty-three have perished so far, possibly the highest death toll in a Moscow fire in over a quarter century. Over 200 other students were injured—almost all hospitalized—and more could die. Officials quickly pinned the cause of the fire on the students themselves, claiming either misuse of electrical fixtures or arson by dormitory residents. But they were forced to back off after shock, grief and outrage poured in from the students' homelands around the world. Twelve of those who died were from the Peoples Republic of China. The Chinese ambassador Liu Guchang rushed to the site of the fire; three days later a special delegation from Beijing arrived. Meanwhile, ambassadors from a number of African countries (Gabon, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Burundi, Congo, Chad and Algeria) have formed an investigation commission with Russian authorities to determine the cause of the fire and to monitor the care and compensation of the victims.

In a grotesque insult to the grieving student body, just hours after the fire, classes were ordered to resume! "They put out the fire at 4 or 5 a.m. and students went to school at 9 a.m.... I feel that they do this because most of the victims are foreigners," said Sydney Ocran, a Liberian student.

The real cause has not been proven, but what has been established is that the PFUR dormitories are horrendous fire traps. In March 2003 the university was cited for 36 violations, including absence of extinguishers, public address system, fire alarms or even an evacuation plan. Dormitory No. 6 was used to pack in newly-arrived students for quarantine;

AFP

African students lay flowers in front of burnt shell of Moscow dormitory.

they spoke little if any Russian. Yet there was not even an established plan to alert students in case of emergencies! The acting university rector and another administrator have been charged with criminal negligence, and a local fire inspector with lesser charges—essentially for creating a catastrophe waiting to happen. True enough, but many students say that it was not a matter of the odds, but of *arson*; according to an Amnesty International report, most students described the fire as "a racially-motivated act of arson." A Somali student reported, "Skinheads often gather near the dorm" and write racist graffiti. "I have wiped such insults from my door three times" (quoted in *Bigotry Monitor*, 5 December 2003). Aicha Toure, a medical student from Mali, pointed out that "Skinheads have long been threatening us. Last week [three days before the blaze] there was a bomb threat and students were evacuated from one building. But no bomb was found. This [the fire on 24 November] was no accident either." Moisus Lopes of Angola, who studies at a Moscow technical university, said, "How can I stay here if they're setting us on fire. I don't think it was caused by electrical appliances." In 1995, seven students were killed by arson in a building adjacent to Dormitory No. 6.

The students' suspicions stem from the brutal reality of being under constant siege. In 1960, the campus opened as Patrice Lumumba People's Friendship University, the USSR's academy for cadres of Moscow's Third World allies to come as honored guests for training. Soviet authorities had named the university after the Congolese leader who was a victim of racist murder by the CIA and Belgian imperialists in 1961. However, when the Soviet degenerated workers state was destroyed in 1991-92 by the capitalist counterrevolution led by Boris Yeltsin and U.S. president George Bush Sr., these foreign students became targets of racist terror in capitalist Russia.

On 11 August 1992, Moscow police marked the first anniversary of Yeltsin's coming to power by shooting dead a Zimbabwean university student, Gideon Chimusoro. The comrades of the International Communist League's Moscow Station immediately rallied to the defense of the besieged students (see "African Student Murdered by Yeltsin's Cops," *WV* No. 558, 4 September 1992, reprinted in Spartacist pamphlet, *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled*).

The reign of terror has only intensified since then, as skinhead xenophobic terror thrives on Russia's continuing descent into capitalist chaos and poverty. Fascist vigilantes see themselves, and are widely seen, as folk heroes of a domestic front of Russian president Vladimir Putin's genocidal war in Chechnya. They are carrying out his infamous and blood-curdling anti-Chechen incitement to "butcher them in their toilets." In October 2001, a mob of 250 skinheads rampaged through a Moscow immigrant street market killing three and injuring 30. On 17 September 2003, a three-day-long regional pogrom against Chechen students in the south of Russia culminated in Nalchik, capital city of the Kabardino-Balkarian region, where 54 Chechen students were attacked, one fatally.

But native minorities, particularly Chechens, can fight back. So it is foreign students who are the fascists' preferred targets. Most report having been attacked many times, some as many as ten. Even the South African ambassador's wife was beaten and burned with cigarettes in broad daylight in the Russian capital. Attacks by Russia's estimated *20,000* skinheads concentrated in Moscow and St. Petersburg happen weekly, if not daily. "If you go to the cinema or to a stadium, it means you want to die" said Diboi Kath, PFUR student from Cameroon, who has been abused, beaten and even shot by racist thugs. But there are no hard police report statistics because, as an Ethiopian refugee explained, "The police are just as bad. In fact, I run faster from them than I do from the skinheads." When a Cameroonian prince, studying in the southern city of Voronezh, tried to report a skinhead attack,

> "The police sergeant told me to put my hands up, but I said, 'Why? I'm the innocent one here. I'm the victim, and a guest in your country, so I'm asking for your help.' Then one of the other cops just started punching me in the stomach. Really hard, as if I was a boxing bag.... Then I was arrested for wasting police time."

Students were subjected to racism even by the emergency crews on the night of the November 24 blaze. The ambulances took away injured Russians first, leaving half-naked foreign victims to suffer frostbite. They later took the foreign students only after trying to extort money from them.

The siege of the PFUR international students has not let up since. Just five days after the fire, 25 skinheads arrived in waves on buses, and launched a, by now routine, well-coordinated attack, hospitalizing six students. Colombian student Hernan Muñoz jumped in to save his roommates. He knew the stakes; two years ago skinheads had cut off his finger. In the following month, students were forced to evacuate dorms and classrooms at least nine times because of bomb threats. On December 16, a second fire, of unknown origin, broke out in Dormitory No. 9. The next day, an arsonist started a fire in Dormitory No. 7.

Dormitory student councils have now organized voluntary round-the-clock patrols. "Nobody will defend us but ourselves," said Chinese female student Lee Sin, who lives in Dormitory No. 11. "So I take my watch shift, even though I have been assigned from 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m."

The Moscow dormitory fire has lit up the ghastly face of capitalist Russia. This is what we warned capitalist counterrevolution would bring, and that is why we fought to the end against it. As we wrote:

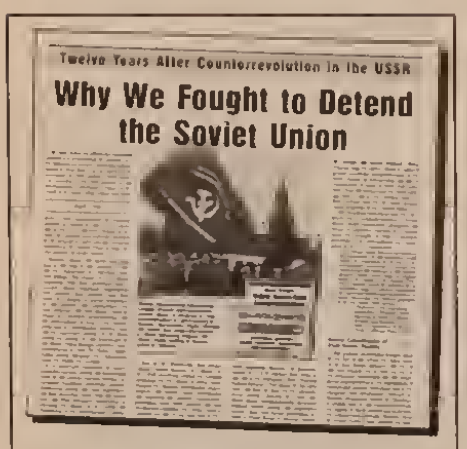
> "Uniquely, the ICL intervened in the Soviet Union beginning in the late 1980s seeking to mobilize the working class against the powerful forces, backed by world (centrally American) imperialism, driving toward capitalist restoration. This was part of our struggle for new October Revolutions around the world."
>
> —"Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union," *WV* Nos. 809 and 810, 12 September and 26 September 2003

Students report that survivors are in desperate need of aid, lacking everything from clothes to soap and toothpaste. Donations can be wired to the following account of the Association of African Students of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia:

International Humanitarian Initiative Fund, Account 40703840700000011024

Beneficiary bank: Badr-Forte Bank, 31/1 Obraztsova St., Moscow, 127018, Russia SWIFT CODE: ICBA RU MM

Intermediate bank: Raiffeisen Zentral-Bank, A-1030 Vienna, Am Stadtpark 9, Austria SWIFT CODE: RZBA AT WW, Correspondent account 70-55.047.021 ■



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PDC Holiday Appeal

Thousands of Dollars Raised for Class-War Prisoners

In December, the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, held its eighteenth annual Holiday Appeal fund drive for class-war prisoners. The PDC sends monthly stipends to 16 prisoners, including Jerry Dale Lowe, a West Virginia miner imprisoned for defending his picket line, and death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Lively benefits held in Chicago, San Francisco and New York raised almost $11,000, bringing together trade unionists, youth and other activists. In carrying out this yearly effort to raise money for the stipends sent to class-war prisoners and for extra funds for them and their families during the holiday season, the PDC is inspired by the traditions of the International Labor Defense (ILD). The ILD was born out of discussions in Moscow in 1925, fusing the revolutionary internationalism of the Bolshevik Revolution with the principle of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World that "an injury to one is an injury to all!"

As we noted in a *Workers Vanguard* article shortly before the Holiday Appeals, the benefits took on particular significance because of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. This criminal attack has provided the pretext for the administration, with the Democrats in near-unanimous agreement, to embark on a qualitative diminution of democratic rights in this country, combined with intensified imperialist war internationally. As we wrote, "The government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap your phone, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause that a crime has been committed" (*WV* No. 814, 21 November 2003).

A prime example of how the government seeks to expand its power is seen in the case of Jose Padilla, an American citizen peremptorily declared an "enemy combatant" and denied access to an attorney without charges being filed and confined within a military brig. Last summer, the PDC and Spartacist League submitted an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief on behalf of Padilla, warning that through his detention the Bush administration is asserting nothing less than the right to disappear citizens. This case was highlighted in an 11 December 2003 letter from union official Earl Silbar accompanying a donation to the Partisan Defense Committee from AFSCME

WV Photo

Tony Van Der Meer, antiwar UMass professor facing frame-up charges, addresses NYC PDC benefit.

WV Photos

Top: New York City Holiday Appeal benefit, 13 December 2003. Inset: Poster display features class-war prisoners receiving monthly stipends from PDC.

Local 3506 in Chicago: "This attack on Jose Padilla represents an attack on every one of us. If they can make unsubstantiated charges, imprison him, and deprive him of his rights, they can do the same to any of us."

A U.S. Court of Appeals decision on December 18 ruled that Bush and Ashcroft could not indefinitely detain Padilla as an "enemy combatant." As we welcome every setback to Washington's police-state designs, we also recognize that such rulings are partial and reversible. In the case of Padilla, the outcome is still uncertain as the government has issued an appeal; Padilla remains locked in a military brig.

Most of the class-war prisoners honored at the Holiday Appeal benefits have been incarcerated for at least a quarter century. The vicious campaigns against these courageous individuals have been waged under both Democratic and Republican administrations, underscoring the point that the capitalist class is united against fighters on the side of the oppressed. A critical case in point is Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther and MOVE supporter who has been on death row for over 22 years, framed up for killing a cop. Over two years ago, Jamal's attorneys filed a confession in court by Arnold Beverly, stating that he, not Jamal, killed Officer Daniel Faulkner. In December 2001, a federal court in Pennsylvania overturned the death sentence while at the same time affirming the frame-up conviction. Both the prosecution (seeking to reinstate the sentence of death) and Mumia (seeking to overturn the conviction) appealed. Those appeals were placed on hold pending a ruling on Jamal's appeal before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which finally ruled in October to again bar Beverly's testimony from being introduced into evidence and uphold Jamal's conviction. Since then, Jamal has filed a *habeas corpus* petition in the Pennsylvania courts seeking to overturn his conviction and death sentence. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must demand: *Free Mumia now!*

Reflecting the non-sectarian character of the PDC's work, numerous individuals of various political viewpoints attended the Holiday Appeals. Our Boston comrades brought with them to the New York benefit Tony Van Der Meer, the UMass-Boston professor outrageously arrested on that campus last year at the height of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Professor Van Der Meer was tackled, thrown to the ground and handcuffed for the "crime" of coming to the defense of a student being harassed by National Guard military recruiters while handing out flyers for a commemoration honoring Martin Luther King Jr. In a speech to the benefit, Professor Van Der Meer described his continuing legal battle against bogus charges stemming from that police attack and remarked that he appreciated the support given him by the PDC and Spartacist League.

In building for the Holiday Appeal, our insistence that the working class must break with the capitalist Democratic Party in order to advance its own interests and those of the oppressed elicited much discussion and debate. In Chicago, for example, our comrades had repeated arguments about this question at various union halls we approached for support; one local union president who supports much of the work of the PDC still vehemently argued, "We've got to do everything we can to get rid of Bush"—i.e., vote for the Democrats. The speech given for the Spartacist League at the Chicago Holiday Appeal (reprinted in its majority below) combated such illusions in the Democrats and provoked wide-ranging political debate, which ended with one union organizer purchasing from us a copy of Lenin's 1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, to read more of the classic writings shaping our views today.

Speakers and letters submitted to the Holiday Appeal at all three benefits reflected the work of other organizations as well. David Wilson of the Committee to Release Farouk Abdel-Muhti spoke at the benefit in New York. He followed the

Labor Black League for Social Defense

Workers Vanguard Discussion Group

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speeches with a video depicting the government's campaign against Ahdel-Mahti, a Palestinian-born activist who has been detained for over 20 months and threatened with deportation for his political activism. In the Bay Area, a statement by the Bay Area Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu was read into the Holiday Appeal. Vanunu is an Israeli of great courage and conviction who was arrested in 1986 for publicly revealing Israel's massive nuclear arsenal. For his service to humanity, Vanunu was convicted of treason and espionage and sentenced to eighteen years in a prison hellhole. He has been given an official release date of April 22; as that date approaches, Israeli officials are working to try to ensure that Vanunu remains silenced. In New York, artwork movingly provided a face to one of the class-war prisoners; Phil Africa sent a beautiful oil painting he did in his prison cell, which was auctioned and purchased by a PDC supporter.

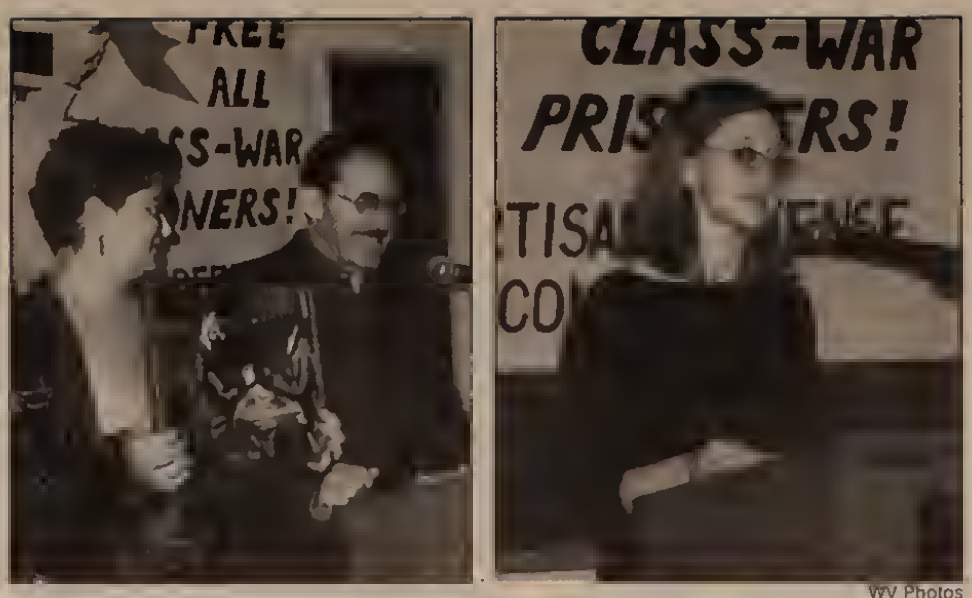
At the end of the New York Holiday Appeal, the emcee read the following portion of a 15 July 2003 letter from one of the Miami Five, who have been imprisoned by American authorities for their defense of the Cuban Revolution. The letter was addressed to Joanne Landy, a right-wing social democrat and lifelong opponent of the Cuban Revolution:

"I've always had the best of respect for the honest Americans who, overcoming the immense power of the most sophisticated machinery of deception ever designed, have been able to look beyond all of that to have a view of world events that pays homage to this country [Cuba]. It takes a lot of intelligence, curiosity, courage and, above all, a lot of sensitivity.

"I want to appeal to that sensitivity and, with all my respect, invite you to think of this: One thing was to be a Roman citizen, with all privileges accorded to full citizenship, discussing democracy and liberty on the senate or on the streets of Rome; and another thing, completely different, was to be fighting for that democracy and that liberty, in the field, against all odds, under the siege of Pompeii legions, defending your very life together with Spartacus."

* * *

Spokesmen for the Spartacist League, Spartacus Youth Clubs, the Labor Black Leagues and the PDC addressed all three Holiday Appeal benefits. We print below excerpts of the Chicago SL speech.



WV Photos

Left: Auction of painting by Philadelphia MOVE massacre survivor, Phil Africa, donated to NYC benefit. Right: New York Spartacus Youth Club speaker, Angie Swanson.

Seizing on the criminal attack on the World Trade Center, this government has launched an all-out assault on our most basic civil and democratic rights. Theirs is not a war *on* terror. Rather, from Baghdad to Benton Harbor, the bourgeoisie is carrying out a war ***of terror.*** As frightening and reactionary as the Bush administration is, they are not imposing this agenda on their own. The funding for the war and the passing of the Patriot Act were carried out by both parties of capitalism. The maintenance of a racist system that relegates thousands to homeless misery, layoffs and prison hellholes is not a Republican plot. The Democrats, black and white, are just as committed to maintaining this rotting capitalist system as George W. In fact, most of the immigrants held by the government are detained not under the Patriot Act but under Clinton's 1996 Immigration Act. Most notable of those detained is Jose Padilla. His case is a frontal assault on the very concepts of due process and citizenship itself. It is the Dred Scott case of today—citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect. Let me say one word in light of the upcoming presidential elections—beware! Those snake-oil salesmen of the Democratic Party will be all over us pushing the same stinking garbage in a pretty, new pail.

The ravages of this decaying class society daily claiming new victims is a pretty horrific sight, and I can see how one may be prone to feel a bit helpless and hopeless. But we in the Spartacist League do not see it as hopeless nor do we feel helpless, not by any stretch. You see, there *is* something that can bring this capitalist economy to a halt which would throw a big monkey wrench into their plans: class struggle. The one force with the social power to break the power of the capitalist rulers *is* the working class. Doing that requires leadership. What is desperately needed, is a multiracial revolutionary workers party committed to educating and mobilizing working people *in* their own interests. As communist revolutionaries, we understand that no reform, no right is secure or lasting under capitalism and that this system must be rooted out through a socialist revolution. It is not enough to protest; those who labor must rule. There is a massive reservoir of potential power right under our noses, but it must be made class-conscious and mobilized. Our sections internationally are fighting for the same revolutionary program, to build workers parties in their respective countries.

Now, there are two major obstacles in the road towards building that party in America. One is the illusion that the Democrats can be pressured to act in our interest. And in this they get invaluable help from their agents *in* the labor movement—the trade-union bureaucracy. Labor lieutenants of capital, we call them. Take one look right here at our brothers and sisters in ATU 241, railroaded into arbitration and saddled with a rotten contract by their own officials. This is a transit union that has the power to bring the third largest city in the U.S. to a grinding halt or at least turn downtown into a parking lot, yet the union bureaucracy did ***nothing*** to mobilize that power. Why? Because that power scares the hell out of them just as *it* scares the bosses. The stacked deck of arbitration, going to the bosses' courts, "getting out the vote"—these are all losing strategies. What's needed is independent action. Workers must use their labor power as did the L.A. longshoremen who effectively shut the port down for eight hours in solidarity with the grocery workers strike. Social power does not come from pushing a doorbell or manning a telephone bank for the "labor's candidate" (the only time the bureaucracy mobilizes the membership)—the ***power to strike*** is the workers' ace card.

The second obstacle is the poisonous division along race and ethnic lines in the working class, in particular anti-black racism, which only serves the bourgeoisie by keeping us divided. The black question is the Achilles heel of U.S. capitalism, and linking the fight for black freedom and the fight against the grinding exploitation of labor and against capitalism—that combination of black and red—is potential social dynamite.

Now, some call fighting for workers

continued on page 6

Letters to the Partisan Defense Committee

We print below excerpts of a letter to the Partisan Defense Committee by Wadiya Jamal, wife of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

November 21, 2003

To All Of Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express my deepest appreciation to the Partisan Defense Committee and all of its affiliates, who have fearlessly risen to the challenge of fighting for the oppressed. The PDC in its efforts, has placed itself on the front line, and continues to provide support, on many levels, to my husband Mumia and myself. We are tremendously grateful for all you have done, all you have given, and all that you are.... Together we will continue the struggle and defeat the unjust. **Long live the PDC.**

On a Move,
Wadiya A. Jamal

* * *

We print below excerpts of a letter to the PDC by Janet Africa, who has spent over 25 years in prison, falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own crossfire during the brutal 8 August 1978 police siege on the MOVE home in Philadelphia.

I would like to take this time to thank you all at PDC, all the supporters and contributors who make it possible for us to receive the donation that we've been receiving for years. With the way society is today, being able to live, take care of yourself and support a family is hard and costly, so for those who give to the holiday fund raiser, we appreciate it.... We use the funds to buy typewriter ribbons, stationery and postage to send people revolutionary information from all around the world. I write people in Soreauren, Navarro Spain, Munster Germany, Africa, Croatia, France, England. Debbie and Janine who are here with me at Camhridge Springs prison write those and other countries also.... Watching the dishonesty of this government, deliberately misusing their position to start wars and take the young men, women, the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, recruit mothers, fathers, friends of ours, to fight a war that could have been avoided, sending our loved ones back home in body bags saying they gave their lives for their country, when in fact their lives were taken for the politics of this country, not for peace as this country is trying to lead people to believe. It's time for these politics, those running the government to he stopped. Freedom can only be realized when people realize that this system feeds people's weakness and takes their strength. People are seeing more and more the lies and corruption of this system and they resent it, people are starting to revolt, demonstrate and speak out against this system and before long this system will tumble. Revolution is the only hope we have of setting ourselves free and everyhody who believes in freedom needs to fight too. Thank you for helping us pass the ***words*** that will turn into the formation of this revolution.

I'm going to close for now, all of you stay strong and keep working for this revolution, and know that I am committed for life to do the same.

Ona Move
Janet Africa
LONG LIVE JOHN
AFRICA'S REVOLUTION!

* * *

We print below excerpts of a letter to the PDC by Jamal Hart, who was sentenced in 1998 to 15 1/2 years on bogus firearms possession charges. Hart was targeted for his prominent activism to free his father, Mumia Abu-Jamal.

November 6, 2003

Many freedom fighters are still ***residing within the belly of the beast*** and still continue to ***resist and avoid destruction*** mentally and physically, dig me.

These freedom fighters, political prisoners, prisoners of war, and unjustly convicted like this author and his father, Mumia Ahu-Jamal, Assata Shakur, Delbert Orr Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Debbie Sims Africa, William Phillips Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Phillips Africa, Charles Sims Africa, Edward Goodman Africa, Hugo Pinell, Ed Poindexter, Jaan K. Laaman, W.M.E. we Langa, Raymond Lue Levasseur, Jerry Dale Lowe, Sundiata Acoli, Leonard Peltier, Herman Bell, and many more that continue to ***avoid destruction*** and ***resist*** and support those that are still keeping this struggle alive in these days in time.... So let's really take a close look at a great man's words that founded and established a true outlook on our future as well as our past as stated, "The victory of the class-war prisoners is possible only ***when they are inseparably united with the living labor movement and when that movement claims them for its own***, takes up their battle cry and carries on their work" (James P. Cannon, 'The Cause that Passes Through a Prison.' Labor Defender, Septemher 1926, reprinted in Notehook of an Agitator).

Lastly, PDC and all supporters I humbly thank you all for your needed support that has assisted me through numerous adversities and trials and tribulations that one contends within these prisons. I would like to also state that these ***good ole boys networks*** of prison officials are getting a clear wake-up call that we are not ***alone***. The most powerful impact is how we must continue to come together as a whole and support each other to the fullest of the working class, the poor, and black and minorities capacity. We will prevail, **FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, PRISONERS OF WAR, FREEDOM FIGHTERS, AND THE UNJUSTLY CONVICTED NOW!!!!**

By: Jamal Hart

Big Brother...

(continued from page 1)

percent of passengers would fall into the "yellow" category.

Major U.S. airlines are proclaiming their refusal to supply data for CAPPS II testing while they wait for the government to order them to comply. But data on millions of air travelers has already been secretly turned over to the government as part of testing CAPPS II. In September 2002, JetBlue Airways handed over data on several million passengers to a Department of Defense contractor, but in the face of a lawsuit by outraged passengers, they promised never to turn over information again without a court order and issued a public apology. Last year, revelations that Delta was participating in CAPPS II testing triggered a consumer boycott. A Northwest spokesman told the *New York Times* (23 September 2003): "We do not provide that type of information to anyone." Yet last week, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by the Electronic Privacy Information Center, it was revealed that Northwest had turned over to the government three months of passenger data involving more than 10 million passengers in 2001!

If U.S. citizens are regarded as "terror risks," visitors from other countries come in for much worse. In addition to the harassment, intimidation and humiliation routinely meted out to them, the government this month launched the US-VISIT (United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology) program. US-VISIT records the fingerprints and digital photos of all visitors to the U.S. except those from 27 countries—mainly West European—granted an exception. In response to this blatantly racist plan, Brazil retaliated by fingerprinting every U.S. citizen entering the country and even briefly detained an American Airlines pilot who protested the measure by making an "obscene gesture."

Some international flights arriving in the U.S. have been "escorted" by F-16 fighter jets, whose only purpose can be to shoot down civilian airliners! Other flights have been summarily cancelled based on nebulous "security" tips, including six Air France flights on Christmas Eve. Over the opposition of international pilots' unions and foreign governments, the U.S. insisted that undercover armed marshals be stationed aboard "suspect" flights.

US-VISIT compares foreign visitors' personal data to watch lists of suspected "terrorists" and alleged criminals and creates a comprehensive database that will be kept for 100 years. On January 12, the Department of Homeland Security issued

AP

Foreign visitors at San Francisco International Airport line up for mandatory fingerprinting under Orwellian "anti-terror" regulations.

a very unconvincing denial of reports that the US-VISIT data would be merged with the CAPPS II database. As travel-privacy advocate and writer Edward Hasbrouck noted recently, merging CAPPS II with US-VISIT would lead to "lifetime dossiers of Americans' movements both in and out of the country" (*Wired* magazine Web site, 13 January).

Already today, anybody and everybody is a suspect in the government's unrestrained crusade against "terrorists" in the skies. During the protests against the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the government used a "no-fly" list to prevent activists from attending demonstrations against the war. The Feds' list of suspects spells Arab names phonetically, leading to the harassment of anyone whose name sounds like anyone else's. One recent "terror" suspect on a passenger list turned out to be a five-year-old child! In the fall of 2002, Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian citizen, was arrested at JFK as he waited for a connecting flight home. Falsely profiled by the INS as a terrorist, he was deported to Syria where he was beaten and tortured.

Workers in the transportation industry have enormous social power in their ability to shut down the airports, ports and transit systems. That power should be mobilized against the government's panoply of "anti-terror" laws, which are ultimately aimed at repressing class and social struggle. However, the current union tops stand as an obstacle to such labor struggle, more often than not going out of their way to comply with "security" campaigns. A 2 January article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* quotes the director of air safety and health for the Association of Flight Attendants, Chris Witkowski: "We'd like all reports of unusual events to be going directly to the government for analysis." The support for the "war on terror" by such labor bureaucrats underscores the necessity of fighting to forge a class-struggle leadership in the unions.

Defend Democratic Rights!

The Bush administration's CAPPS II program is yet another confirmation that the "war on terror" is aimed at gutting the civil liberties of the population as a whole. Using the September 11 attacks as a pretext, the government rounded up some 1,200 immigrants from predominantly Islamic countries and, with bipartisan support, enacted the Patriot Act and a host of executive orders under which the government's secret police have vastly expanded authority to tap phones, interrogate librarians and arrest people without probable cause that a crime has been committed. Bush has pre-empted the Democrats who protested that the Republicans' 2004 budget for the domestic "war on terror" was insufficient. He is now seeking to increase spending on "domestic security" by 9 percent to nearly $45 million for the 2005 budget.

While Attorney General Ashcroft's proposed Patriot II act has faced public outcry, provisions of this proposed evisceration of constitutional rights have been quietly enacted. As the hoopla over the U.S. capture of Saddam Hussein filled the news on December 13, Bush signed the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 into law, which gives the FBI unprecedented power to get financial records on anybody they want without a court order and broadens the definition of "financial institution" to include insurance companies, travel agencies, the U.S. Postal Service and even jewelry stores and car dealerships. This piece of repressive legislation passed overwhelmingly in both houses of Congress, illustrating the Democrats' allegiance to the "war on terror."

Recent court decisions have not gone entirely in the government's favor. Last month, a federal appeals court ruled that the government could not legally detain U.S. citizen Jose Padilla as an "enemy combatant" without a trial or access to his lawyer. This month, the Supreme Court agreed over the objections of the U.S. government to hear the case of Yaser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen detained in Afghanistan and declared an "enemy combatant" who is being held in a military brig in Charleston, S.C.

Last November, the Supreme Court also agreed to hear the case of detainees being held at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The Bush administration cynically argues that American courts have no jurisdiction to hear petitions challenging the legality of these detentions because the base is outside U.S. sovereignty, and it is denying the detainees "prisoner of war" status in defiance of the Geneva Convention. The Supreme Court has agreed to decide on the jurisdictional issue as to whether these prisoners can go to U.S. courts for *habeas corpus* review to challenge the lawfulness of their imprisonment, but will not review whether the administration must comply with the Geneva Convention. At the same time, the Supreme Court let stand a lower court ruling upholding the government's secret arrest and detention of hundreds of mainly Muslim immigrants in the weeks following the September 11 attacks, and it further eroded Fourth Amendment and privacy rights by upholding "informational" police roadblocks on the nation's streets.

The Fourth Amendment of the Bill of Rights, which was written in the aftermath of the American War of Independence, prohibits "unreasonable searches and seizures." One of the ideals of that bourgeois revolution was that the state and its police powers should not be raised above or be unaccountable to the citizenry. This is a cruel joke today, as our so-called "inalienable" rights are being systematically eroded under the pretext of the bipartisan "war on terror." It is only we communists who have a program to fight to defend the democratic gains of the first American Revolution, as well as the second (the Civil War and the smashing of slavery), as we fight for a third American revolution to obliterate bourgeois state terror forever. ■

PDC Appeal...

(continued from page 5)

government utopian. But, frankly, to call on the Democrats, the party that led this country into World Wars I and II and Vietnam, the party that unleashed nuclear weapons on Japan, that fought tooth and nail to uphold segregation and preserve the Jim Crow South, to call on them to fight for black rights, justice and equality—now *that's* fantasy. The capitalist state, be it administered by the Democrats or the Republicans, is not some neutral body. It is composed of an arsenal of tools, armed bodies of men such as the cops, the prisons, the army, the courts that exist solely to maintain the capitalists' class rule and keep the majority of the population in line.

Besides, we know it can be done because it *has* been done! In 1917, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the Russian working class seized state power in its own name, for the first time ushering in a workers state, a collectivized planned economy. We defended the socialized property forms in the USSR until the bitter end. We called not for a return to capitalism, but for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and to return to workers democracy. Today's "Russian question" is China. We Marxists have a yardstick with which to measure the level of progress in any given society—the status of women. The Chinese Revolution is a graphic example of this, where women went from the hideous tradition of foot-binding to becoming full members in social production.

Let me conclude with a story. In January 1917, Vladimir Lenin (leader of the Russian Revolution along with Leon Trotsky) was speaking in Switzerland where he said, "We in the older generation may not live to see the revolution." Within weeks the Russian workers and peasants had toppled the tsar—and by the end of the year, the Bolsheviks held state power. Now, I am not suggesting that we will be ringing in the New Year with an American working-class government occupying the White House or seizing the means of production (as gratifying as that may be). What I am saying is that world events can change our daily lives quickly and dramatically, and with that comes a qualitative leap in consciousness of the masses. We live in a very stable, yet unstable society. Even here in the heart of the "world's only superpower," within weeks the political landscape can change dramatically where all bets are off and the population is no longer willing to be ruled as before. History has shown that the question is not *if* class struggle will erupt, but *when*. And it's our job to be ready, to have that party in place that's capable of leading the working class in the revolutionary transformation of society, overthrowing capitalism, and establishing a planned, collectivized economy that can lay the basis for a socialist egalitarian society. There are few guarantees in life, but I do know that if you don't fight, you don't win. It is in this fight that we ask you to join us. ■

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forums

L.A. Labor Struggle: Which Way Forward?

Unchain Labor's Power! Break With the Democrats!
For a Revolutionary Workers Party that Fights for All the Oppressed!

Victory to the UFCW Strike!

Thursday, Jan. 29, 7 p.m.
UCLA, Math Sciences Bldg.
Room 5225 (near Parking Lot 9)
(exit Wilshire-East fr. 405 Frwy.
take Westwood Bl. north)

Saturday, Jan. 31, 3 p.m.
Immanuel Presbyterian Church
3300 Wilshire Blvd. (at Berendo)
(2 blocks west of Wilshire/Vermont
Red Line station)

LOS ANGELES

For more information: (213) 380-8239
E-mail: slsycla@cs.com

Young Spartacus

ISO Backs Capitalist Greens in S.F. Elections

ISO Reaches Its Nader

The ISO has once again called for a vote to a *capitalist politician*, this time endorsing Matt Gonzalez of the Green Party for San Francisco mayor in a campaign he narrowly lost last month. The fact that the ISO instructed workers to place confidence in a representative of the bosses exposes their pretension of being any sort of socialists.

The essence of capitalist society is found in the merciless exploitation of the working class. Whoever upholds the interests of the capitalists stands *counterposed* to the interests of the proletariat. Notwithstanding the ISO's statement that "We do not support candidates of capitalist parties like the Democrats or the Republicans," printed in every issue under a headline reading "Where We Stand," the Green Party by its own admission defends the rule of capital.

Marxists seek to further the struggle of the working class to end the rule of the bourgeoisie; first and foremost, workers must organize independently of the capitalists and their state. A vote for even the most left-wing bourgeois candidate—which Gonzalez most certainly is not—is a vote of confidence in the reformability of capitalism. Advocating a vote for a capitalist politician can only be an attempt to deflect workers and revolutionary-minded youth from seeing the need to fight to overthrow capitalism and to pull them into the fold of bourgeois electoralism.

The ISO admits that as head of the city council, the second most powerful post in San Francisco, "Gonzalez has at times contradicted his own principles" (principles, of course, that the ISO has invented for him). Cast aside as "mistakes" amid their enthusiasm in *Socialist Worker* is the true face of this capitalist politician:

> "During the mass direct action protests last spring after Bush invaded Iraq, Gonzalez chided demonstrators to 'go protest in a city that hasn't already passed an antiwar resolution'—and supported the police arresting thousands of demonstrators blocking city streets and corporate headquarters."
>
> —*Socialist Worker*, 14 November 2003

As with the rest of the capitalist politicians who spoke from the platform at antiwar rallies (including one in San Francisco last spring where he told the crowd that the city is "having a budget crisis right now, so do me a favor and don't turn over any police cars" [*Los Angeles Times*, 1 April 2003]), Gonzalez's purpose was to confine protest within limits acceptable to the ruling class. As soon as the war started and some protests took a more militant turn, he cheered on state repression of the demonstrators. The ISO also admits:

> "As president of the Board of Supervisors (San Francisco's city council), Gonzalez opposed amending the city charter to dedicate more money to public schools. He also touts his 'fiscal responsibility'—and supported an $80,000 hike in the supervisors' salaries, while city workers took a 7 percent wage cut and other concessions to balance the budget."
>
> —*Socialist Worker*, 5 December 2003

The ISO is so craven and cynical as to state that Gonzalez "sees his third-party campaign as part of building a mass movement that can challenge the growing gap between rich and poor." Clearly, this attribution to Gonzalez is a concoction on the ISO's part, unless by "poor" you mean Gonzalez and his fellow supervisors.

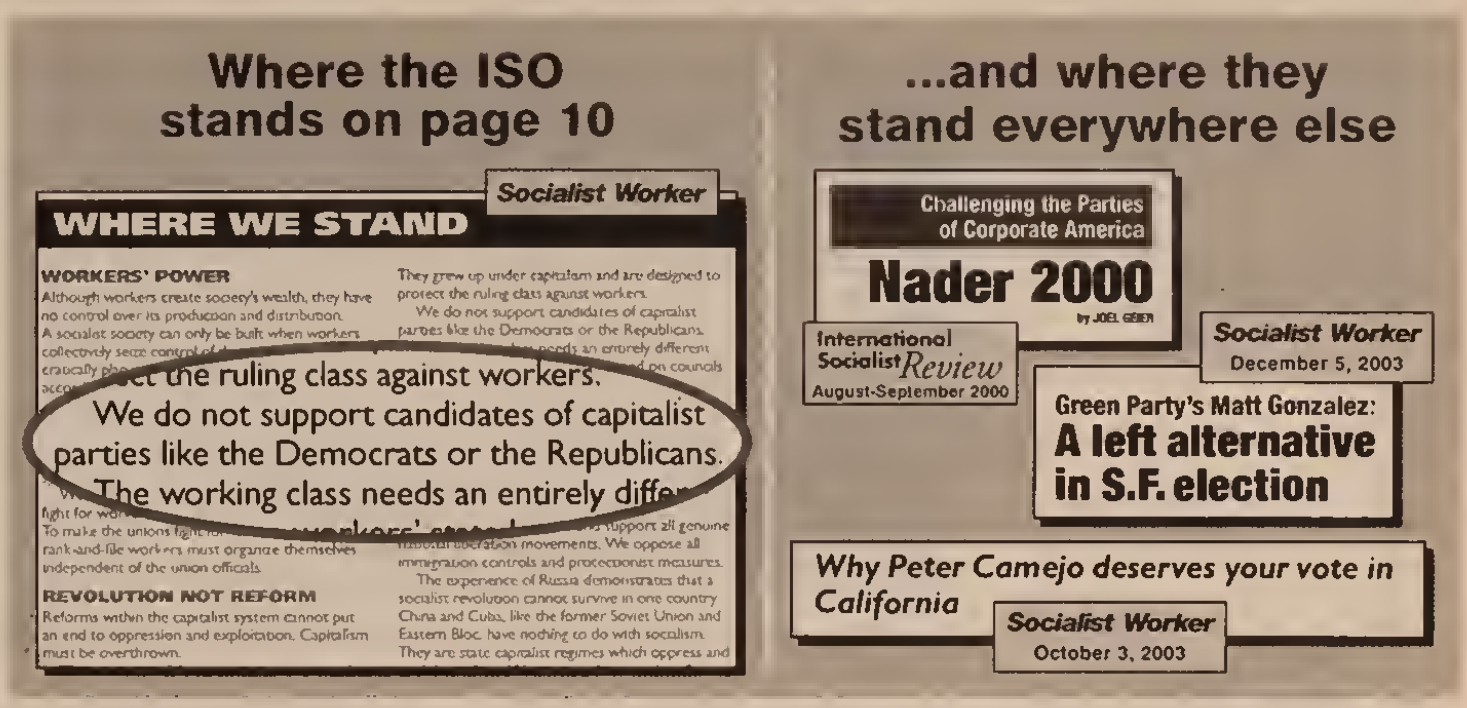
Gonzalez is forthright about what he stands for. In an interview on 16 September 2003, Hank Donat of MisterSF.com asked Gonzalez if he was a socialist "as one weekly paper has called him." Gonzalez replied: "Democrats want everyone to believe that Greens are to the left of them because the Greens can always be marginalized.... When you get into economic decision-making, in a lot of ways the Greens are more conservative and pragmatic," adding, "Do you think [conservative San Francisco supervisor] Tony Hall would nominate a socialist to the board [of supervisors] presidency?"

his joining the presidential race "could work to the Democrats' advantage: By hammering away at populist themes... he would force the leading Democratic contenders to move left. That, he says, would expand the party's base" (10 January). No wonder "Nader speaks on platforms with Kucinich" (*Socialist Worker*, 10 October 2003), as the ISO confesses. Their intentions toward the Democrats are one and the same.

Seriously now, when have three capitalist ruling parties been better than two? Mexico has three, and most bourgeois democratic countries have even more; does this mean they are closer to socialism? What is really going on is the ISO's domino theory of pressure politics—even when there was a candidate workers could critically support, as with Socialist Workers Party's Joel Britton in the California gubernatorial recall election, the ISO went for the capitalist Greens.

Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader is said to be watching the San Francisco results closely" (*Socialist Worker*, 14 November 2003). But the ISO was thrown in a tizzy when Ralph Nader wrote to the party's steering committee that he was withdrawing as a presidential candidate this year. The ISO now is in the very compromising position of trying to pressure Nader to run for the Greens so that he can be pressured to pressure the Democrats to reform the capitalist system. And they say this strategy is not utopian but a socialist workers revolution is?!

But it is utopian to think that the capitalist rulers could be pressured to make this society anything other than a class-divided, war-ridden, racist hellhole. The Democrats are what they are because they, like the Greens, defend the interests of the capitalist class. Their state, whoever is administering it, is there to defend the capitalists' property "rights." It cannot be modified, it must be smashed by socialist revolution to create a workers government. To vote for a bourgeois politician as a part of "building the movement" is an *obstacle* to mobilizing workers in class struggle against the capitalist rulers. The party the working class needs is not a "third" party of the class enemy but a revolutionary workers party.■



It is clear that what motivates the ISO in this opportunist maneuver is not the politics of an individual politician, but simply that the Greens are a currently popular and liberal third party and thus supposedly a "real alternative to the two-party duopoly that runs Washington" (*Socialist Worker*, 5 December 2003). In truth, the Greens are nothing more than an attempted saving grace for the Democrats. After all, what else other than party affiliation could fundamentally differentiate the Democratic Party candidate the ISO argues against voting for, Dennis Kucinich, from the Greens? Their man, Gonzalez, must not have seen much of a difference when he decided to *endorse* Kucinich for the U.S. presidency. Nor did the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which published an article headlined in part, "Greens aren't so different from the pols they seek to replace" (7 December 2003).

The ISO states that "the purpose of Kucinich's run is to appeal to progressive voters—like the almost 3 million who voted for Ralph Nader as a third-party alternative in 2000—and pull them into the Democratic Party" (*Socialist Worker*, 10 October 2003). They quote Kucinich saying: "The Democratic Party created third parties by running to the middle. What I'm trying to do is to go back to the big tent so that everyone who felt alienated could come back through my candidacy." Well, that sounds like a theme of Nader's. The *New York Times* reports on Nader's explanation of how

While we are still eight months away from the presidential elections, the last *eight issues of their paper* (starting from November 2003) have had at least one major article on them. The ISO's obsession is political. In fact, the main reason for the ISO backing Gonzalez was that "The election could have an influence on the 2004 presidential race, as 2000 Green

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

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VANCOUVER

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Forum Chambers, Maggie Benston Centre, Simon Fraser University
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Brazil...

(continued from page 1)

between labor and capital; since at least the 1989 presidential elections, this has been its program and perspective.

The popular front ties the proletariat to its class enemy, subordinating the workers' interests to capitalist rule. The whole history of Leninism and Trotskyism has been a struggle against class collaboration and for the political independence of the working class. That is how the Bolshevik Party was able to lead the workers of Russia to power in October 1917. Following the February Revolution which overthrew the tsarist monarchy, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries entered into a coalition government with bourgeois forces. Lenin's Bolsheviks denounced this as a betrayal of the proletariat, refused to give any support to the government and demanded "Down with the ten capitalist ministers!" It was a measure of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state that, against the whole experience of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Stalinized Communist International enshrined the "People's Front" at its Seventh Congress in 1935. Renouncing the revolutionary internationalism that animated the Russian Revolution, the policy of the popular front was part of the Kremlin's futile strategy of appeasing world imperialism by derailing workers revolution around the world.

Class-collaborationist maneuvers like the popular front are a guarantee to the bourgeoisie that the capitalist economy and private property will be protected. The experience of Chile in the early 1970s illustrates this. In 1970, Salvador Allende came to power at the head of the Unidad Popular, a popular front of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party in coalition with small bourgeois formations. Committed to upholding the bourgeois state, the Unidad Popular government preached that the workers should trust the "constitutional officers" in the high ranks of the armed forces. As we wrote at the time of Allende's coming to power:

> "It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."
>
> —"Chilean Popular Front," *Spartacist* No. 19, November-December 1970

Tragically, our warnings were proven correct. In 1973, General Augusto Pinochet led a bloody coup that crushed the left and trade unions in Chile, and resulted in thousands tortured, disappeared and murdered. This is an example of why Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, said that the popular front is not a tactic, but the greatest crime.

The key difference between Brazil today and Chile in the early '70s is that Chile was in a pre-revolutionary situation which the popular front served to defuse. In contrast, Lula came to power with the blessing of the Brazilian bourgeoisie because the capitalists figured he had the authority to convince workers to accept austerity measures. Moreover, less than a year after the sustained protests in Argentina against the IMF's bleeding of that country's economy, sections of the Brazilian bourgeoisie wanted a president with the credentials to control or prevent any potential struggle. The PT is a bourgeois workers party, a party with a working-class base but a leadership with a pro-capitalist program. This contradiction between the base and the top of such a party is suppressed when it takes office and administers the capitalist state. Indeed, to both the imperialists and the Brazilian bourgeoisie, Lula is a credible servant.

The International Communist League opposes popular fronts and all other forms of class collaboration as a matter of *principle*, as a key component of our fight for the ***political independence of the working class and against its subordination to the bourgeoisie.***

AFP

Civil servants on strike denounce Lula as a traitor.

Lula Regime Attacks Workers, Peasants, the Poor

In its first year in office, the Lula government has produced a budget surplus even higher than the one demanded by the IMF. This was achieved by slashing social expenditure and increasing layoffs, accompanied by state repression. The government, for example, spent 48 billion *reals* (roughly $17 billion) to pay debt interest to the IMF in a three-month period last year, while less than a third of this amount has been invested in infrastructure. Since Lula took office, unemployment has risen by some 600,000. According to the *New York Times* (4 January), the purchasing power of the population has diminished by 20 percent, while expenditures on social programs have been reduced by 8 percent in comparison with the final year of the previous government.

Eduardo/BG Press

Leaders of Landless Peasants Movement under arrest after hundreds occupied ranch owned by then-president Cardoso, March 2002.

The government's attack on the pension system sparked outrage. Hailed by the IMF, this measure, enacted on December 11, will drastically reduce state workers' pensions. The minimum retirement age will be raised to 60 for men and to 55 for women. The official retirement age for men now surpasses the average life expectancy of 59. In response to the proposed pension cuts, the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT—Sole Center for the Workers)—the gigantic union federation associated with the PT—launched an 800,000-strong public workers strike in July that lasted over a month. When the pension reform bill was presented to the Brazilian Senate and National Congress, four parliamentarians from the "left wing" of the PT dared to vote against it. In revenge, Lula's PT leadership expelled them from the party in December.

Another instance in which the Lula administration has demonstrated its loyalty to capitalism has been the land question. Lula's former allies in the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST—Landless Peasants Movement) demanded land for 120,000 peasants. Lula dashed their hopes by whittling his promise down to a mere 7,000 parcels. The failure to distribute even that triggered a wave of land occupations by the peasants. Lula countered by allowing the big *latifundiários* (plantation owners) to arm bands of paramilitary murderers to defend their property. The Pastoral Land Commission documented that 71 agricultural workers were murdered between January and November 2003. Meanwhile, peasant leaders languish in jails; José Rainha, a leader of the MST, was convicted for land seizure in 2000 and imprisoned for over three months beginning in July 2003—i.e., under Lula's regime.

This December, the Lula government signed into law a bill that raises the minimum age for gun ownership to 25 years and requires a psychological test before purchasing a gun. The law explicitly forbids citizens from carrying their guns anywhere outside the home. This ensures that only the cops, security guards and paramilitary death squads will be armed in the streets, giving them an even freer hand to carry out their reign of terror against landless peasants in the countryside and the poor, especially black people, in the *favelas*, the shantytowns that permeate the urban landscape. According to Amnesty International, over 700 people, overwhelmingly black, were killed by the cops in the state of São Paulo between January and October 2002. The new law also sets a 2005 nationwide referendum to try to ban guns altogether. ***No to gun control!***

The Potential of the Brazilian Proletariat

Brazil is a huge country of 175 million people with the eleventh-largest economy in the world; its industrial infrastructure makes it the economic heart of Latin America. Brazil is a country of extremes, not least in its distribution of income. While big foreign firms like the German auto giant Volkswagen make millions in profit from their Brazilian plants, the impoverished population starves in the poor and overcrowded *favelas*. The "war on drugs" has turned these *favelas* into shooting galleries where police gun down street children and the poor. According to the most conservative estimates, there are hundreds of thousands of *meninos de rua* (street kids) in Brazil today, fighting for survival.

In the countryside, barely 1 percent of the population owns 46 percent of the arable land; some 4.8 million rural families have no land. Despite the myth of racial democracy, Brazil is a hideously racist country where roughly half the population is black or mulatto (the government is notorious for undercounting the number of blacks) and treated like second-class citizens. Abortion is illegal except in cases of rape.

In the last decade, conditions for the working masses in Brazil have gotten worse. This is a direct result of the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-92 which emboldened the American imperialists and their rivals to squeeze the semicolonial world even harder for profits. From Latin America to Asia and Africa, the number of people living on less than $2 per day has swelled as their governments fork over billions of dollars in debt payments to the IMF and World Bank. In countries such as Argentina, the industrial working class itself has been decimated and pauperized by layoffs and factory closings. One manifestation of the worsening conditions for the working class and poor in Brazil is the increasing prevalence of debt slavery. Numerous organizations document the use of slave labor in the production of Brazilian charcoal as well as on ranches, in mines and logging operations.

Throughout the 20th century, the enormous investment of foreign and state capital into Brazil's economy produced a modern industrial infrastructure which, however, coexists with the most backward forms of subjugation in the countryside and with a brutal and unstable political system. Therefore, although the national capitalist class holds state power, it is forced to live on the credits and investments of its imperialist masters.

At the same time, if the imperialists seriously felt that their financial interests in Brazil were being jeopardized either by an insurgent proletariat or by nationalist or populist elements, they would not hesitate to intervene. For example, shaken by the 1959 Cuban Revolution and the failure of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, the John F. Kennedy administration feared the spread of "Castro-communism" throughout Latin America, particularly in desperately poor regions such as the northeast of Brazil. Kennedy launched the "Alliance for Progress" with promises of "nation-building" and aid for the needy. Part of the U.S. "aid" package was training the Brazilian police and special forces in the bloody arts of "subversive tracking" (i.e., assassination) and "crowd control" (i.e., police riot). Kennedy's intervention in Brazil culminated in the 1964 military coup d'état against the bourgeois-nationalist Goulart government. This ushered in two decades of totalitarian dictatorships under the military and their death squads.

Today, the Brazilian bourgeoisie, sitting on top of one of the most important economies in the continent, aspires to overcome its subordinate status and become an independent imperialist power. (In fact, Brazilian capitalism is one of the few "Third World" economies that can support its own airplane industry, EMBRAER, and even an independent space program.)

The Lula administration flaunts a number of timidly nationalist positions regarding foreign policy, particularly its opposition to the tariffs imposed by the U.S. government on imports of Brazilian

Ripper/Imagens de Terre

Brazilians held in debt bondage await rations. Some 25,000 are enslaved in Brazil.

steel, and recently walked out of the Cancún summit of the World Trade Organization in protest of the FTAA's agrarian policies. Fundamentally incapable of opposing the imperialist system, Lula's government offers symbolic gestures of "independence"—which are sufficient to infuriate the arrogant Bush administration—such as Lula's visit to Libya and Syria, where he called to "end the occupation" of Iraq, or the decision to photograph and fingerprint all Americans entering Brazil, in retaliation for the treatment given by U.S. authorities to Brazilians and others. Additionally, Lula recently signed a commercial accord with China covering agribusiness, technology, construction and natural resources, and jointly launched an earth-monitoring satellite last October.

Notwithstanding the pretensions of Brazilian capitalists and the nationalist ideology they push, the historic reality of our era is that the imperialist countries of North America, West Europe and Japan are not willing to let any other country become a major imperialist power. Indeed, the door to the imperialists' elite club was slammed shut by the turn of the 20th century and never reopened. South Korea and Argentina provide dramatic examples: yesterday's perpetually "emerging powers" have been devastated by brutal economic crises generated by the demands of the imperialists.

The solution to the economic backwardness suffered by the Brazilian people cannot be found in the "national" development of capitalism. The only solution is the Trotskyist program of *permanent revolution*. Only a socialist revolution, with the proletariat at its head, can begin to liberate the working class, the peasantry and all the oppressed. The fight for proletarian power in Brazil must be linked to a revolutionary internationalist perspective of workers revolution throughout the region and in North America.

AP

12,000 auto workers protest threatened job cuts at Volkswagen auto plant near São Paulo, August 2003.

Der Spiegel

Slums overlooking Rio de Janeiro high-rises highlight the massive disparity between rich and poor in Brazil, one of the world's most unequal nations.

In "Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution" (1940), Trotsky wrote:

> "South and Central America will be able to tear themselves out of backwardness and enslavement only by uniting all their states in one powerful federation. But it is not the belated South American bourgeoisie, a thoroughly venal agency of foreign imperialism, who will be called upon to solve this task, but the young South American proletariat, the chosen leader of the oppressed masses. The slogan in the struggle against violence and intrigues of world imperialism and against the bloody work of native comprador cliques is therefore: the *Soviet United States of South and Central America*."

He continued:

> "Only under its own revolutionary direction is the proletariat of the colonies and the semicolonies capable of achieving invincible collaboration with the proletariat of the metropolitan centers, and with the world working class as a whole. Only this collaboration can lead the oppressed peoples to complete and final emancipation, through the overthrow of imperialism the world over."

In Brazil today there exists a social force of flesh and blood capable of carrying out this perspective: the industrial working class. Currently, only 9 percent of the Brazilian gross domestic product comes from agricultural production, while over 29 percent comes from industry, above all metallurgy and auto manufacturing. The Brazilian proletariat, with its enormous black component, has behind it a heroic history of struggle, and is organized in strong union federations. With its hands on the levers of the economy and the power to shut down production, the Brazilian proletariat is the social force that can lead the struggle on behalf of all the oppressed, from the urban poor in the *favelas*, to oppressed women, to landless peasants. The culmination of this struggle must be a society where those who labor rule: a workers state.

The weight of Brazilian industry within the continent gives an idea of the electrifying effect that the Brazilian proletariat in action would have on the rest of Latin America and the world. From the restive Bolivian working masses and the discontented workers of Argentina, including the vast sector of unemployed, to the workers of the Mexican *maquiladoras*, from the multiracial working class of the U.S., especially the Latino immigrant proletariat, to the black proletariat of South Africa, a workers revolution in Brazil could be a catalyst for class struggle throughout the world. In turn, given the level of international interpenetration of the modern economy, a workers revolution, even in Brazil, could not survive in isolation, nor could socialism be constructed without extending the revolution internationally, especially to imperialist centers like the United States.

We Spartacists fight to bring to the workers of Latin America the understanding that they have no common interests with their "compatriots" of the national bourgeoisie, but that, instead, their best comrades in the struggle against imperialism will be the workers of industrialized countries like the United States. In the last instance, only with the participation of workers in the imperialist states can capitalist imperialism be destroyed, and the enormous resources of these countries be placed at the service of all humanity. It is necessary to break the workers in countries like the U.S. from the influence of their chauvinist trade-union leaders who push the interests of imperialism, and win them to an internationalist perspective of joint struggle with the workers of all the oppressed countries.

The Responsibility of the Left

The four PT members who were expelled from the party for voting against the pension "reform" last December are all part of the PT "left wing," which reportedly influences some 30 percent of the membership of the PT and the CUT trade-union federation. Expelled Senator Heloísa Helena and others have recently launched a new party to "reclaim" the traditions of the PT. But workers disillusioned with Lula deserve better than old garbage hidden in new pails.

The PT is a social-democratic party: that is, an organization whose basis of support in the workers movement is in contradiction with its programmatic goal: administering the capitalist state. In the 1980s, the PT's local governments administered the interests of the bosses, collaborating in layoffs, budget slashing and state repression. The best known case was that of Luiza Erundina, the PT mayor of São Paulo, who broke an important strike by the municipal transport workers. Beginning in 1999, the PT held the governorship of the state of Rio Grande do Sul for four years, where they controlled the state police forces and implemented the austerity program of the federal government.

Where were these distinguished "left" PTers all these years? One particularly grotesque case is that of minister Miguel Rossetto, one of the most famous "left" PTers, a member of Socialist Democracy, the Brazilian associate of the United Secretariat (USec) and also Lula's minister for agrarian development—i.e., he is helping to ***directly administer the capitalist Brazilian state.*** As our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France wrote in *Le Bolchévik* (No. 166, December 2003):

> "Miguel Rossetto is 'minister of agrarian development' in a government that has distributed less land to the landless peasants than all preceding governments, jailed José Rainha, the historic leader of the Landless Peasants Movement (MST), and grants immunity to the killers in the pay of the *latifundistas*. In the November issue of *Lutte de classe*, journal of Lutte Ouvrière, you can read: 'On August 14, the Supreme Court annulled a decree allowing the expropriation of 13,200 hectares [about 25,000 acres] to 500 families, sparking the occupation of the land, which led Miguel Rossetto to declare that "in a democratic state of law, the decisions of the Supreme Court must be respected".'...
>
> "We are opposed in principle to participation in an executive organ of the bourgeois state because it would mean taking responsibility for and participating in the repression of workers and the oppressed."

This has been a split issue ever since the French Socialist Millerand accepted a ministerial post in 1899. The debate this betrayal precipitated in the Marxist movement drove the revolutionary Marxist Rosa Luxemburg to write her classic 1900 polemic *Social Reform or Revolution*. The bourgeoisie allows "socialists" into their governments on the condition that they defend capitalism against its enemies. To accept executive office is to accept in practice the false proposition that the working class can lay hold of the bourgeois state machinery and wield it for its own purposes. In reality, the lessons of the bloody suppression of the 1871 Paris Commune showed that the levers of the existing capitalist state power cannot simply be seized by the workers and used to liberate the proletariat. The bourgeois state, the executive committee of the capitalist class, at its core consists of bodies of armed men committed to defending capitalist property. It must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced by organs of proletarian power, i.e., a workers state.

Now, while his fellow Socialist Democracy tendency members, like Heloísa Helena, are purged from the PT for voting against Lula's attack on pensions, Rossetto has opted to hold on to his ministerial portfolio. Indeed, most of the Socialist Democracy parliamentary cretins are more than willing to maintain their little niche inside Lula's PT. In fact, Heloísa Helena's vote against the pension reform was ***in opposition to the general line of Socialist Democracy***—the tendency's other MPs voted in favor, with two

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Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program
International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Adopted in 1998 at the Third International Conference of the ICL, the ICL's Declaration of Principles is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist international which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution.

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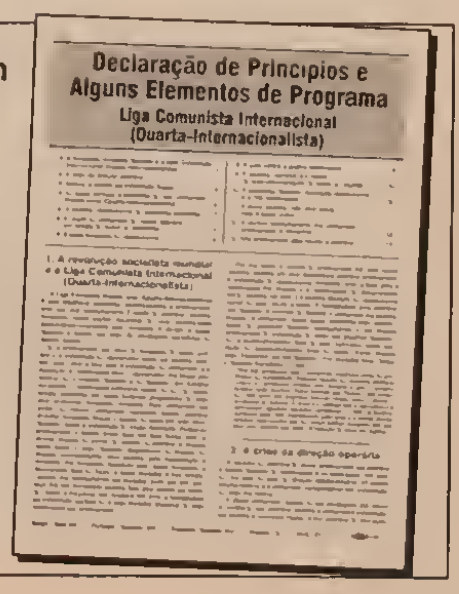

Brazil...

(continued from page 9)

abstaining! This should be enough for any member of the USec who considers himself a socialist, or at least an opponent of the IMF's measures, to abandon his organization with disgust. This is the bitter fruit of "doing work" within a popular front.

In November 1994, when the USec's association with Lula's PT was still a point of international "pride," and the USec boasted of its "influence over the masses in Brazil," the speaker for the International Communist League, Joseph Seymour, said in a public debate with the USec leader Ernest Mandel:

> "You've got nothing! You know what you have in Brazil? You have a bunch of *apparatchiks* for Lula! If tomorrow Lula said, 'Repudiate the Fourth International, repudiate Trotskyism, repudiate the dictatorship of the proletariat, or you're expelled,' you know what would happen? Half of you would be expelled, the other half would repudiate Trotskyism."
>
> —"Spartacist League Debates Ernest Mandel," *WV* No. 611, 25 November 1994

The majority of the leaders of the "left" tendency in the PT belong to other organizations which cynically claim to be Trotskyist. Luciana Genro and João Batista Araújo (Babá), for example, belong to different currents which follow the late pseudo-Trotskyist Argentine *caudillo* Nahuel Moreno. But the PT, with its internal currents, is not the only organization of the Brazilian workers movement. The Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado (PSTU), Brazilian section of the Morenoite tendency, is another group that seeks to take advantage of the disillusionment among workers by presenting themselves as the left alternative to the PT. In the first round of elections in 2002, the PSTU ran independent candidates, obtaining more than 400,000 votes and the support of a big part of the so-called "far left" in Brazil. However, the PSTU voted for Lula's popular front in the second (and decisive) round of the elections.

In fact, the campaign documents of Zé Maria, presidential candidate for the PSTU, are distinguished from those of Lula by their more nationalist rhetoric. Far from utilizing its campaign to unmask the fraud of bourgeois "democracy," the PSTU explicitly promised to administer the capitalist state supposedly for the benefit of the dispossessed majority. Yet the most revealing part of its electoral program is the extensive section dedicated to "public security," where they promise to subject the Brazilian police and army to "democratic control" by the population. As core elements of the bourgeois state, the police and army can never be reformed to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. Moreover, consistent with its reformist politics, the PSTU in its 2002 electoral program called to improve the salaries and the working conditions of the police, complaining that currently the police lack "security equipment such as bulletproof vests and even handcuffs and ammunition."

Let's not forget that we are talking about the racist Brazilian police, which uses its bulletproof vests to "safely" (for the cops) repress workers demonstrations, its handcuffs to chain peasant fighters and its ammunition to assassinate street children! It should be an elementary truth, for anyone claiming to be a Marxist, that police are not part of the workers movement but the attack dogs of the bourgeois state!

AP

Mexican police assault anti-globalization protesters in Cancún during WTO meeting, September 2003.

In the end, it was a division of labor in the service of class collaboration: the PSTU used its extensive influence among workers to bolster the "proletarian" credentials of the PT; the PT, in turn, subordinated the workers to the bourgeoisie in a capitalist popular-front government which is now implementing the IMF's austerity plans. The PSTU shares responsibility for the Lula regime's anti-working-class measures.

Another organization on the Brazilian left, the Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI), is characterized by covering its reformism with revolutionary phrasemongering and *vile anti-Semitism* (see "The Brazilian LBI: Centrism of Fools," *WV* No. 806, 4 July 2003). The LBI correctly denounced Lula's popular front and refused to give any support to the reformist PSTU, criticizing them in particular for their position to reform the police. But, in reality, the LBI does not oppose the popular front out of any principle, as shown by its support to the PT in the 1989 elections.

When the criminal World Trade Center attack took place in September 2001, the LBI described it as a legitimate act "by the Islamic militants who responded militarily to the permanent war that imperialism imposes on the peoples and oppressed nations of the Near East, by means of the unconventional 'military' resources they had available" (*Jornal Luta Operária*, September 2002). The LBI went so far as to assert that the workers killed in the attack on the WTC were a "minority" among "CIA agents" (*Marxismo Revolucionário*, December 2001)!

As for the cops, in a polemic against us in the same issue of *Marxismo Revolucionário*, the LBI complains with bitterness: "The most incredible thing is that this tendency [the ICL] grossly falsifies the LBI's positions, accusing us of defending the police, or that the police are part of the working class. Grotesque lie against the LBI." Really? While they hypocritically recite: "No support to the reactionary police strike" ("Strike in the Police," *Marxismo Revolucionário*, December 1997), the LBI explained touchingly that "to support the demands of the police is not the best way to accelerate an open fissure within the ruling classes." And then they proceeded to propose a "better" way: "For the formation of red unions inside the troops of the armed forces and the Military Police!" In the Brazilian steel town of Volta Redonda in 1996, the LBI ran for leadership (and won control) of a cop-infested municipal workers union. Their leader, Artur Fernandes, was a staunch supporter of keeping the cops in the union. *Cops out of the unions!*

The LBI's rotten bloc partner for control of the municipal workers union in Volta Redonda was the LM/LQB (Luta Metalúrgica/Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil), which was later to be embraced by the minuscule Internationalist Group of Jan Norden as its Brazilian affiliate. An LQB supporter and ex-cop, Geraldo Ribeiro, ran for president and won with a majority of the cops' votes. The ICL insisted that LM/LQB act in accordance with its professed agreement with our program and act to separate the cops from the municipal workers union. But after a sufficiently lengthy period of discussion, we broke fraternal relations with the LQB over its unprincipled trade-union opportunism (see "A Break in Fraternal Relations with Luta Metalúrgica," *WV* No. 648, 5 July 1996). Afterward, when the LQB's rotten bloc with the LBI fell apart, each side dragged the union through the bosses' courts to hold tight to their union posts.

For a Leninist Party in Brazil!

Increasingly, the workers are calling the PT the "Party of Traitors." With its gigantic working class becoming more disillusioned with the broken promises of the popular front, the peasant movement fighting desperately for land and the political situation highly volatile, Brazil promises to be the stage of convulsive class battles. However, there are no impossible situations for the bourgeoisie; it is necessary to throw them out.

The situation in Brazil powerfully exemplifies the statement that Leon Trotsky made in the Transitional Program in 1938: "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." We Marxists in the ICL understand that what's necessary to unchain the revolutionary potential of the Brazilian proletariat is to forge a revolutionary internationalist party. Such a party would struggle to break the working-class base of the PT away from its current leadership as part of the struggle for workers power, fusing intellectuals and students won to the side of the proletariat with the most advanced elements of the working class.

In a 7 September 2003 manifesto, the PSTU declared, "We Need a New Party to Unite the Brazilian Left." In opposition to the Brazilian fake Trotskyists, we fight to build a ***Leninist vanguard party***. Their "new mass party" is in fact an old reformist idea: Karl Kautsky's "party of the whole class." It was one of Lenin's greatest contributions to the Marxist movement to realize that the *precondition* for a successful proletarian socialist revolution was a ***split with the opportunists*** in the workers movement, the labor lieutenants of capital in the trade unions and the "socialist" parliamentarians who cling to the coattails of the bourgeoisie.

We fight for an authentically Marxist party which will champion the rights of all the oppressed—blacks, women, homosexuals, peasants—with a class-struggle program dedicated to bringing the working class to power. In Brazil, while suffering intense racial oppression, black and mulatto workers have enormous potential social power as part of the proletariat.

A revolutionary party must aspire to become the "tribune of the people": that is, to be capable of counterposing, in practice, the liberating ideas of communism to the prejudices of the dominant ideology in all aspects of social life: against prevailing male-chauvinism in Brazil's Catholic society; for the struggle for women's liberation as a central element of the party's program, fighting for free and legal abortion and against anti-gay discrimination; fighting against deeply rooted racism, raising the banner of black liberation and fighting in defense of peasants and indigenous people against the landowners' and cattle ranchers' brutal campaign of extermination. Such a party must be built in the struggle against the narrow and economist perspective of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy. It must put itself at the head of the struggles of all the oppressed as part of the fight to establish working-class rule, smashing the rule of the bosses and placing the immense resources and energies of the country in the service of the most urgent human needs. This perspective is necessarily internationalist and is part of the struggle to reforge the Fourth International to lead new October Revolutions. It is the perspective of the International Communist League.■

CORRECTIONS

In "U.S. Imperialists Rape Iraq" (*WV* No. 817, 9 January), the article "Guilty of Being a Palestinian in Iraq" was attributed to the *Nation*. In fact, the article was printed on the *CounterPunch* Web site on 22 December 2003. In "Federal Court Rules Against Ashcroft, Bush on Padilla" in the same issue, we stated that the ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California that "the law was unconstitutional because it would ensnare anyone who did anything from donating to an orphanage run by a banned group to buying 'cookies from a bakesale'" referred to the court's 18 December decision that the government's indefinite detention of prisoners in Guantánamo, Cuba was unlawful. In reality, this statement referred to the 3 December ruling by the same court against Clinton's 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which is referred to later in the paragraph. Finally, in "Build Picket Lines! Extend UFCW Strike!" in the same issue, we incorrectly wrote that the supermarket workers strike was moving "into its third month." In fact, the strike was already in its third month and moving into its fourth month.

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Jackson...

(continued from page 12)

(30 November 2003) notes, the boy only revealed the supposed "improprieties" after seeing a therapist—and he was taken to the therapist *after* his family had already contacted a lawyer linked to the 1993 allegations of child molestation against Jackson. And despite the D.A.'s assertion that the sexual contact happened after the first investigation by the Los Angeles authorities, there's a curious overlap, since the charges state the "lewd acts" happened starting on February 7, that is, a week before the first investigation. As former L.A. prosecutor Chris Darden, of O.J. Simpson fame, said: "Apparently the D.A....expects us to believe that Michael Jackson not only molested this kid prior to the children's services investigation, but while the investigation was going on. And then continued to molest this child even after that investigation" (*CNN Legal Roundup*, 19 December 2003).

According to Harvey Levin, producer of *Celebrity Justice*, "This boy told a

AP

Obsessed Santa Barbara County D.A. Thomas Sneddon, who failed to get Jackson a decade ago, still pursuing his vendetta.

therapist that Michael Jackson fondled him in his private parts, but he's a very reluctant witness. He did not come out and spill his guts about what allegedly happened between him and Michael Jackson. We're told it literally had to be pulled out of him, first by attorney Larry Feldman and then by a therapist, who ultimately got the story from the boy" (Yahoo! India News, 29 November 2003). This all sounds like it's another of those cases of fake "recovered memories." What is clear is that whatever happened (if anything happened) between the two was entirely consensual.

Within the boy's family, accusations have been flying back and forth about the character of those involved. The boy's father, who lost custody of the children after he pleaded no contest to charges of spousal abuse and child cruelty, claims the mother made their kids lie about those charges and is now fighting to overturn them. He says he believes Michael Jackson's side of the story and is trying to get a separate lawyer for the kid in the case (*Celebrity Justice*, 1 December 2003).

A Modern-Day Lynching, Indeed

This case has gamered worldwide attention, as befits a record-breaking entertainer. Fans from Tokyo to Budapest have held vigils and demonstrations in support of Michael Jackson. Even spunky Canadian Web site www.injusticebusters.com took time off from frigid Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for a moment to comment on this most evident of injustices, comparing it to the McMartin day-care case of 20 years ago in Los Angeles. Then, wildly fantasized tales of satanic rituals and sexual abuse of children led to a widespread anti-sex witchhunt and the destruction of dozens of lives, including those of the kids who were brainwashed into believing in their own victimization.

It is noteworthy that among American blacks, Jackson's support runs particularly strong. In the entertainment business, several high-profile black artists, from "King of Comedy" Steve Harvey to R&B diva Alicia Keys to rappers LL Cool J and Missy Elliott, have rallied in support of Jackson. Black Democrats Jesse Jackson Sr. and Al Sharpton have taken short breaks from their perennial gigs as fringe liberals selling illusions in the Democratic Party to address the clear sense of injustice around this case. Even the virulently anti-gay, anti-anything-sexual Nation of Islam of Louis Farrakhan has taken up his defense with a front-page article in their paper, where they summarize black activist Dick Gregory's reaction to Michael's arrest: "If they can do this to a Michael Jackson—with his money and stature—then they can do it to anyone in the Black community" ("Michael Jackson: Innocent Until Proven Guilty," *Final Call*, 4 December 2003). As his brother Jermaine Jackson so aptly put it, this persecution is a "modern-day lynching" (CNN, 20 November 2003).

Down With Puritanical Anti-Sex Laws!

There is a justifiable felt anger over seeing that, in racist America, having money does not exempt you from being a target for state persecution and frame-ups when you're born black. But many of those who are defending Jackson this time around would quite like the idea of incarcerating proven "pedophiles." People who normally embrace the most backward, anti-gay, anti-"pedophile" religious

Library of Congress

Internationally renowned Irish playwright Oscar Wilde was pilloried in Victorian England for homosexuality, "corrupting the morals of youth."

consciousness are embracing Jackson, and that is in fact a good thing for him. But unlike the myriad ministers and rap stars around who claim Michael could never be guilty of such a "heinous crime" as having sex with 12-year-old boys, we defend him against state persecution particularly because we fight for people's right to have consensual sex with whomever they choose. The only guideline that ought to exist in sexual relations is the rule of *effective consent*, regardless of age, gender or race. Michael Jackson's defense is also a defense of everyone's privacy and sexual freedom.

While it is possible that Michael Jackson has been thoroughly asexual in his relationships with boys, as he steadfastly maintains, to us that is irrelevant. Jackson has been charged under part of the California penal code involving a "lewd act upon a child." It prohibits acts with the intention of arousing, appealing to, or gratifying the lust, passions or sexual desires of the person or the child. The state clearly and willfully does not distinguish between coerced and consensual sexual acts.

The capitalist state is intent on banning all sex for young people to prepare them for a life of unfulfilled desires and urges by imposing abstinence, guilt and fear about wanting to have sex. These laws have nothing to do with protecting children; all they do is enforce puritanical values pushed by religion, and provide a moral justification for government interference in all other aspects of life. As Marxists, we reject all laws that criminalize consensual sex for youth, with or without adult partners. *Down with all reactionary "age of consent" laws!*

The Jackson case represents an intersection of blatant anti-gay bigotry, the reactionary state-enforced stigma against intergenerational sex, and racial prejudice. And just as we defend Michael Jackson against this vicious vendetta, we have always defended the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA)—which advocates the right of men and boys to consensual sexual relations—against state repression. We oppose the government's Internet snooping and anti-child-porn dragnets, which criminalize not only sexual encounters but even the use of visual aids for masturbation.

In the horribly repressive, anti-sex United States of the 21st century, people like Jackson who dare to openly interact physically with children, whether or not there is sex involved, are stigmatized and persecuted. When Oscar Wilde was sent to prison in 1895, by the standards of the narrow-minded, petty and intolerant morals of Victorian England he was "guilty" not only of "gross indecency" (homosexuality) but also of "corrupting the morals of youth." Today nearly everyone agrees that Wilde was brutally victimized by his puritan prosecutors. Yet his two-year hard-labor sentence would be considered far too *lenient* by modern American standards; many a convicted "pedophile" has been sent to jail for decades for charges similar to those against Jackson or Wilde. How far we've progressed in the last century!

Michael Jackson is also facing attempts to yank his three children from his custody, since anyone charged with "child molestation" ends up being considered an "unfit parent" by the courts. Publicity hound Gloria Allred, an attorney on a personal vendetta against Jackson ever since she briefly represented his 1993 accuser, has again asked child welfare officials to take his kids, claiming a "substantial risk that a child will be sexually abused by his or her parent" (AP, 21 November 2003). Allred, notorious for trying to take away O.J. Simpson's kids after his trial, has been gunning for Jackson ever since the odd (but hardly infanticidal) incident where he held his baby son over the balcony of a German hotel for the benefit of his fans. Anyone who has any knowledge about the horrors of "state custody" of children should see this as another example of the state's complete disregard for kids' welfare—and how these moral crusaders' "family values" have nothing to do with protecting kids, or anyone else for that matter. *Hands off Michael Jackson! Leave him alone!* ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson!

Michael Jackson, the 45-year-old black megastar dubbed "King of Pop" for his stellar musical career, is once again being hounded by vicious state prosecutors and unscrupulous media vultures on yet another witchhunt over alleged "child molestation" charges, to which he entered a "not guilty" plea on January 16. Last November, Santa Barbara County District Attorney Thomas Sneddon announced an arrest warrant for Michael Jackson, a day after no less than 70 police investigators invaded Jackson's 2,700-acre Neverland Ranch to conduct a privacy-busting search into his palatial estate. Set up for maximum humiliation, Michael Jackson surrendered himself to police for booking on November 20, and was released after posting an outrageous *three million dollar* bail, many times more than that set for high-profile murder cases. He was charged with seven counts of child molestation and two counts of administering alcohol to a child. After Jackson reported on *60 Minutes* that he was mistreated during the arrest, the Santa Barbara sheriff threatened further criminal charges against Jackson for daring to even speak out about his treatment.

Since then Jackson's life has been plunged into chaos; reportedly already mired in debt, even if he wins this case, Jackson stands to lose millions of dollars in legal fees, not to mention what further impact it might have on his life and career. Should he lose, he could face the prospect of spending the rest of his life behind bars, as each charge carries three to eight years in jail.

This case is a government-sponsored anti-sex witchhunt, targeting a man who is famous for challenging both racial and sexual identities. It showcases the hellhole that is capitalist America, where the government persecutes people for real or imagined sexual adventures—especially if they involve minors—while extolling the virtues of "democracy" and "freedom" by bombing whole countries into submission. The capitalist media, whose main job is to indoctrinate the population with bourgeois values and prejudices such as anti-gay bigotry and racial stereotyping, advance like hungry hyenas on celebrities such as Michael Jackson whenever they dare break the "one man on one woman for life" (as long as they're "adults"!) ideal. "Deviance," as can be seen by watching most of the "celebrity" shows available, is punished with harassment, moral reprobation and, whenever possible, state prosecution, to set examples for the masses. And to be a target for state and media harassment, who better than a black man who sounds very feminine, wears makeup, looks whiter than many "pedigreed" whites and openly professes a love for sharing his bed with pubescent, mostly white, boys?

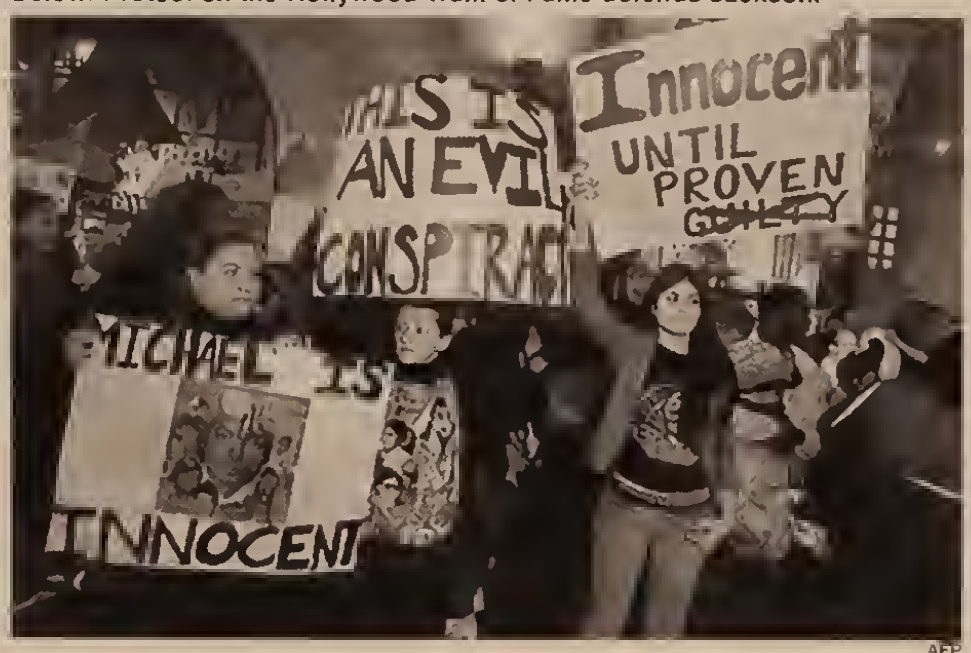
As we said a decade ago when Michael Jackson was facing similar accusations:

> "Witchhunts like the one against Michael Jackson are manipulated for reactionary political ends and serve to reinforce the bourgeoisie's warped and indecent values through fear and intimidation."
>
> —"Stop the Witchhunt Against Michael Jackson!" *WV* No. 592, 21 January 1994

These "morality" campaigns are really designed to prop up and glorify the repressive institution of the family, the main source of oppression of women and children under capitalism. They serve as battering rams for social reaction, from anti-gay bigotry to anti-abortion and anti-science campaigns. The state has no business interfering in people's private lives, much less in what goes on with people's crotches. *Government out of the bedroom!*

AP

January 16: Michael Jackson, accompanied by family members, leaves California court after pleading "not guilty" to charges of child molestation. Below: Protest on the Hollywood Walk of Fame defends Jackson.



AFP

Much has been said about Jackson's bizarre appearance and lifestyle. He seems to commune with chimps and giraffes more than with human beings, loves children to the point of obsession, changes his facial features as one would change a cellphone plate. But despite decades of criticism over his facial reconstructive surgeries which have given him an otherworldly (and decidedly non-black) appearance, Michael looks downright angelic compared to the truly ghoulish creep-meister, District Attorney Thomas Sneddon. Sneddon exhibited such unbridled glee over his chance to nab Jackson—almost foaming at the mouth in front of the cameras—that he later had to apologize for some of his remarks. These included referring to Jackson as "Jacko Wacko" in an interview with Court TV (20 November 2003) and urging the throngs of reporters and cameramen in town to report on the case to "stay long and spend lots of money because we need your sales tax to support our offices" (Associated Press, 26 November 2003).

This is the same guy who tried to put Jackson behind bars in 1993, when an equally flimsy accusation of child molestation by a then-13-year-old boy led to an eerily similar media circus and subjected the artist to unspeakable humiliation, including having pictures of his genitals taken. Everybody now knows the outcome: after months of unbearable scrutiny and a career left in tatters, Jackson reached a settlement resulting in a reported 20 million dollar purchase of the accuser's silence.

But details that came out after investigation by *GQ* reporter Mary Fisher unveiled a very transparent frame-up by the accuser's parents and lawyers, including evidence that money had been asked for by the boy's father *before* the boy actually alleged any sexual abuse. Most damning was the fact that the child had been administered Sodium Amytal, a drug that puts people in a hypnotic state, before the first accusations of sexual abuse were made. As far back as 1952, studies have shown that false memories can be easily implanted in those under its influence. Fisher quotes Cleveland psychiatrist Phillip Resnick: "It is quite possible to implant an idea through the mere asking of a question.... The idea can become their memory, and studies have shown that even when you tell them the truth, they will swear on a stack of Bibles that it happened" ("Was Michael Jackson Framed? The Untold Story," *GQ*, October 1994). And this is what Sneddon wanted to use as "evidence," until the settlement denied him any witnesses to prosecute the case.

A Case Made in...a Hollywood Basement?

This time around, the prosecution's basis for a case, even using the current draconian, anti-sex laws being invoked, is running thinner than a Hollywood diet soup. In fact, new California laws on child molestation were passed specifically in response to the 1993 witchhunt of Michael Jackson. These include tougher sentencing and relaxed requirements for admitting evidence, including allowing "hearsay." Even if the child retracts his charges of sexual abuse, the prosecution of the defendant can still continue. Strangest of all, any prior *allegations* against the accused can be admitted into "evidence," even if the charges had been retracted or were shown to be outright lies, because they supposedly show a "propensity" to commit an offense—sounds more like a "propensity" to be framed up by vindictive prosecutors.

The current case itself is one of flimsy argumentation, unreliable characters and zero evidence. It turns out that between 14 and 27 February 2003 the accusing boy, his mother and his siblings were interviewed by Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services in an investigation following a British TV documentary aired on ABC last February which shows the boy saying he had slept over at the Neverland Ranch with Michael Jackson. The mother told the investigators that her children "are never left alone" with Michael, and when her son slept in Michael's bedroom, they never actually shared a bed. The boy and his brother explicitly denied any sexual contact with the pop star. His sister, who accompanied her brothers on sleepovers at Neverland, corroborated this, saying that she "had never seen anything sexually inappropriate between her brothers and the entertainer." The department and the police concluded the allegations were "unfounded" (www.thesmokinggun.com, 9 December 2003).

Sometime later, the boy's mother decided something "improper" indeed had happened. But as the *Observer*

continued on page 11

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 819 6 February 2004

All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of Occupied Territories!

Israeli Wall Seals Palestinian Ghettos

Defend the Palestinian People!

PENGON

Above: Fortress-like wall around Qalqilya imprisons city's 42,000 residents. Right: Palestinian women try to visit home for last time before completion of Jerusalem wall.

CastelnuovoNY Times

FEBRUARY 3—Palestinian children in Qalqilya play in the shadow of a three-story-high concrete wall as Israeli soldiers train guns on them from guard towers. A despairing family at a checkpoint pleads with Zionist troops to be allowed to take a pregnant woman to a hospital, only to be turned back. Palestinian construction workers under Israeli military guard, sickened by the job they are forced to accept in order to feed their families, construct the wall segregating the Palestinian quarters of East Jerusalem from the rest of the city. Such are the images today of the West Bank under lockdown. The Palestinian population is being imprisoned behind a barrier of huge concrete walls, electrified fences, trenches and razor wire. It is a wall that divides families, separates farmers from their land and cuts off the population from jobs, hospitals, schools and even water.

The path of the wall, which is projected to be over 600 miles long, snakes deep into the West Bank to envelop Zionist settlements and steal Palestinian land. In the west, the wall already juts up to 13 kilometers beyond the "Green Line," the border between Israel and the West Bank, securing Israeli control of much of the best Palestinian farmland. It also includes on the Israeli side the water wells of the Western Aquifer, the second-largest water resource in the region after the Jordan River. According to a 24 January article by Seumas Milne in the London *Guardian*, when complete, the wall will enclose about 57 percent of the West Bank. Movement between the two Palestinian ghettos being created by the wall will be nearly impossible.

As a result of the closures, the Palestinian economy is frozen as laborers cannot get to jobs, farmers can only sell crops locally and unhindered trade is impossible. Palestinian unemployment is a staggering two-thirds in some areas, and more than half the children suffer from malnutrition. Incomes have fallen by more than half to $900 a year—compared with an average of nearly $17,000 for Israelis.

Qalqilya, the first town to be hermetically sealed off by the wall, reveals what other communities will face as the wall tightens around the West Bank. Penned in on all four sides, Qalqilya is today accessible only through a checkpoint nearly a mile to its east. Fully 85 percent of Qalqilya's land has been lost as the Israeli military, despite denials, prevents farmers from tending their fields. A third of Qalqilya's shops have closed, and more than 4,000 residents have already given up and left for good. It's not just Qalqilya's residents who are walled in, but the Palestinian villagers from nearby towns and villages are now walled *out* of the metropolitan center they depended on for everything, from basic services to shops and medical care.

The wall is but the latest grotesque step in the long, bloody history of Zionist colonization and provocation, which are aimed at forcibly driving out the Palestinian population. "Ethnic cleansing" is the logic of all strands of Zionism, from the "Labor" Zionists who founded the state of Israel to the rightist fanatics who inhabit Sharon's government. The Zionists encouraged emigration to Palestine on the racist premise that it was a "land without people for a people without land." They forcibly drove out over 700,000 Palestinians in what they called the 1948 "War of Independence," what the Palestinians call "The Catastrophe" (*Al Naqba*). And they forcibly drove out thousands more after their victory in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

It's a measure of the degeneration and desperation of the situation that policies like the forcible transfer of the Palestinian population, which used to be openly advocated only by the right-wing Zionist fringe, are now common currency. Correspondingly, as the bourgeois-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is proven to be politically bankrupt, increasing numbers of Palestinian youth and even women are turning to the reactionary Islamic fundamentalism of Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Marxists oppose nationalist irredentism, which only offers the prospect of reversing the terms of oppression. The only solution to two peoples laying claim to the same sliver of land requires breaking out of the capitalist, nationalist framework. The only salvation for the Palestinians—and the Hebrew-speaking Jewish population—lies in proletarian revolution and a socialist federation of the Near East. We have no illusions that winning the Hebrew-speaking working class to this perspective will be easy or quick. Yet social and class fissures do exist in Israel and it is the duty of revolutionaries to exploit every contradiction in order to win the Israeli proletariat away from the Zionist rulers.

There is a restive working class in Israel today which has recently engaged in large strike actions. Last spring, the country was paralyzed by a general strike by public workers against finance minister Benjamin Netanyahu's legislation imposing huge wage cuts and layoffs in order to finance the ultra-Zionist settlements in the Occupied Territories and the costs of military repression of the Palestinians. The cost of the Zionist garrison state is literally coming out of the hides of the country's working poor, both Hebrew-speaking and the second-class citizens of the state of Israel, the "Israeli Arabs." If the Israeli Jewish proletariat is to pursue its class interests against its own

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Mexican Trotskyists Say:

For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA!

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Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Egypt: Stop Persecution of Leftist Militants!

Free Ashraf Ibrahim!

The following statement, addressed to Egyptian president Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, was issued by the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League, on February 2.

The Partisan Defense Committee adds its voice to the many civil liberties groups, leftist organizations and socialists demanding that charges against leftist activist Ashraf Ibrahim be dropped and that he be released immediately. Ibrahim was arrested in the aftermath of demonstrations against the U.S.-led Iraq war last year—demonstrations that were brutally suppressed by the Egyptian state. He is being charged with leading an illegal organization, the Revolutionary Socialists group, that purportedly aims to topple the regime, possessing publications related to this organization with the intent to distribute, and sending false information outside Egypt which damaged the state's reputation and position abroad. Outrageously, Ibrahim faces up to 15 years in prison. Four other Egyptian leftists—Yehya Fikry Amin, Moustafa Al Bassiouni, Nasser Al Behiri and Rimon Edward Guindi Morgan—are being tried in absentia on similar charges.

The case against Ibrahim is beyond flimsy; purported "evidence" includes a rough drawing of the house of the education minister which Ibrahim says was drawn by state security forces as part of the frame-up. Among the publications the state is going after Ibrahim for possessing are *History of British Trotskyism* and *Lenin and Trotsky: What They Really Stood For*. Ibrahim and his comrades are being tried for nothing but their political beliefs.

The Egyptian state, a longtime ally of U.S. imperialism and second only to Israel in the amount of American aid it receives, has latched on to the U.S.-led "war on terror" to further stifle political dissent in the country. By using the state security courts, which were established by your regime in 1981 as part of the emergency measures under which you have ruled for over 20 years, the state is ensuring that Ibrahim and the other activists not even be allowed the option of appeal once convicted. These courts have a sordid history of brutality in Egypt, targeting everyone from Islamic fundamentalists to homosexuals. Ibrahim was held without charges for over four months before he was finally indicted in August and his trial began on December 6, 2003. He aptly described the case against him and his comrades as a message to leftists by the government: "We will not allow you to grow after we suppressed other political groups." ***Drop the charges against Ashraf Ibrahim, Yehya Fikry Amin, Moustafa Al Bassiouni, Nasser Al Behiri and Rimon Edward Guindi Morgan! Free Ashraf Ibrahim now!***

Protest letters on behalf of Ibrahim, Amin, Al Bassiouni, Al Behiri and Morgan should be sent to: Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Abdeen Palace, Cairo, Egypt.■

TROTSKY

Black Liberation and the American Socialist Revolution

To commemorate Black History Month, we honor veteran Trotskyist Richard S. Fraser. Fraser's writings on racial oppression illuminate the road to black freedom through the program of revolutionary integration, the fight for a workers revolution that will lay the material basis for the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society. In opposition to the dead end of nationalism and token liberalism we fight for black liberation through socialist revolution!

LENIN

The Negro question appeared upon the scene as a class question: The Negroes were slaves. But alongside of this grew the race question: All slaves were Negroes and the slave was designated as inferior and subhuman. This was the origin of the Negro question.

The abolition of slavery destroyed the property relations of the chattel slave system. But the plantation system survived, fitting the social relations of slavery to capitalist property relations.

Because of these unsolved problems left over from the second American revolution, the Negroes still struggle against the social relations which were in effect a hundred and fifty and more years ago.

The modern Negro movement dates roughly from the era of the cotton gin—approximately 1800. The first answer of the Negroes to the intensification of labor brought on by the extension of the cotton acreage was a series of local and regional revolts.

The slaves learned in these struggles that the slave owners were not merely individual lords of the cotton, but were also enthroned on the high seats of the nation's political capital. They had all the laws, police forces, and the armed might of the country at their disposal.

At the same time the Northern capitalists began to feel the domination of the slave power to be too restricting upon their enterprises. The farmers began to feel the pressure of slave labor and the plantation system. These three social forces, the slaves, and the capitalists and the farmers, had in their hands the key to the whole future of the United States as a nation.

Thus the Negroes were thrust into the center of a great national struggle against the slave power. This was the only road by which any assurance of victory was possible.

Because of their position as the most exploited section of the population, each succeeding vital movement of the masses has found the Negroes in a central and advanced position in great interracial struggles against capitalist exploitation. This was true in the Reconstruction, the Radical Populist movement of the South, and finally in the modern labor movement.

—R.S. Fraser, "For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question" (January 1955), reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 (Revised), "What Strategy for Black Liberation?"

Stop Execution of Kevin Cooper!

The following protest letter by the Partisan Defense Committee was sent to California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on January 26. Schwarzenegger denied clemency for Kevin Cooper on January 30, letting stand an execution date of February 10.

Campaign to End the Death Penalty

Kevin Cooper

The Partisan Defense Committee opposes the execution of Kevin Cooper by the state of California scheduled for 12:01 a.m. on February 10. Capital punishment, whether by electrocution, hanging, gassing or the now-preferred method of lethal injection, is an act of state-sanctioned murder that underlines the already advanced brutalization inherent in this class-divided and race-biased society. The death penalty is the barbaric legacy of medieval torture and, in racist America, of chattel slavery. The primary victims of this legal lynching in the U.S. are black people like Kevin Cooper. Cooper's execution, the first in two years, would place in greater danger the over 640 men and women, largely black and Hispanic, who "live" on California's death row, the largest of any state.

In Kevin Cooper's case, the term legal lynching is not metaphorical. Cooper's 1984 trial on quadruple murder charges was held in an atmosphere of grotesque racist hostility epitomized by the hanging of a toy gorilla in effigy, with signs reading "Kill the N-----" outside the courthouse after he was taken into custody. The evidence against Cooper was tampered with by the police; evidence pointing to another killer was discarded and a confession ignored; clumps of blonde hair, never tested, were found clutched in one victim's hands; and the sole survivor of the quadruple murder, Joshua Ryen, insists that three white or Hispanic men killed his family.

Cooper was tried and convicted as the sole killer despite a statement by an expert from the American Board of Pathology who, after examining the autopsy reports, stated it was "impossible for one person to have accomplished this entire trauma." Yet the prosecution maintained that Cooper, using a hatchet, an ice-pick and a knife, inflicted 159 wounds in 60-90 seconds.

Cooper and his lawyers insist that DNA testing in 2000 falsely linking Cooper to the murders was done on evidence illegally altered by the police. There is, indeed, a long and sordid history of corrupt tampering by the police in this case, from the initial crime lab detective, since fired for stealing heroin, to the criminalist who admits to altering Cooper's test results. Joshua Ryen and his grandmother have questioned the verdict and have supported Kevin Cooper's efforts to get unbiased DNA testing.

We protest the racist frame-up of Kevin Cooper and demand he be freed immediately!■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

No. 31, Summer 2003

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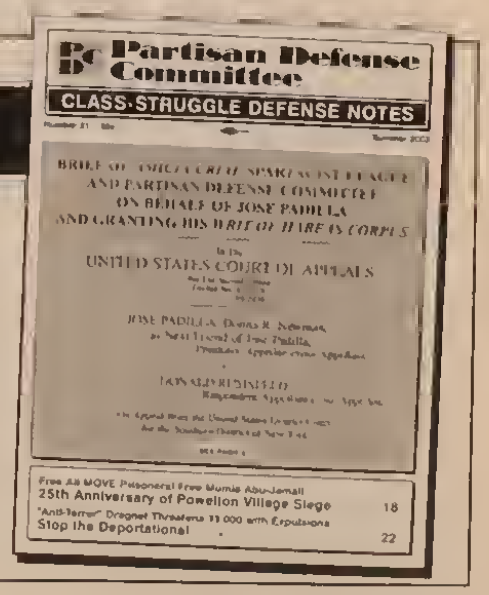

Mexican Trotskyists Say:

For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA!

We reprint below an article from Espartaco *No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.*

On January 31, more than *100,000* demonstrators filled the huge Zócalo in Mexico City to protest the brutality of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This was in response to the clauses in NAFTA that went into effect on

ESPARTACO

PART ONE

January 1 which open up all the basic products of the agricultural economy (except corn, beans and milk) to "free trade" theft. At the same time, the Vicente Fox administration is in the middle of an inhuman campaign to withdraw all subsidies to the countryside. (Today, the government subsidy to the countryside in Mexico is one-tenth of that in the U.S.!) The demonstrators were mainly peasants, but there were also thousands of workers organized in union contingents, both from the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (SME—Mexican Electricians Union) and the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT—National Union of Workers), as well as a large number of students and individual citizens who supported the peasant demands. Days later, on February 5, 19 demonstrators were brutally beaten and arrested by anti-riot police for having hung a banner against the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) on the Ángel de la Independencia monument. Meanwhile, the national and international press of every stripe report on the desperate situation the Mexican countryside faces. The name of one of the peasant organizations that has emerged in the past months renders the situation quite clear: "¡El Campo No Aguanta Más!" [The countryside cannot take anymore!].

The beginning of NAFTA on 1 January 1994 was marked by the EZLN [Zapatistas] uprising in Chiapas, with its denunciation of "free trade" as a "death certificate for the indigenous peoples in Mexico, who for the government are expendable." While this is a country with approximately five million poor and landless peasants—largely horribly oppressed indigenous people—barely 4,000 individuals own 56 percent of the arable land. Without enough funding, with obsolete and even age-old production techniques, and incapable of competing in the capitalist market, most of what the rural toilers produce is essentially for self-consumption, and the average monthly income for peasants is less than 500 pesos. In these conditions, millions of peasants are forced to abandon their lands and emigrate to the cities, where they face a future as beggars, small-time merchants and prostitutes. In Mexico City alone 600 peasants arrive *daily*.

SME

Carlos Ramos Mamahua

Above: Protest by electricians union against capitalists' privatization drive. Right: Mass demonstration of workers and peasants against NAFTA rape of Mexico, January 2003.

For most of the past decade, *maquiladoras* [foreign-owned "free trade" factories] served as a small safety valve for the explosive state of the countryside, attracting the rural population which migrated to urban centers in search of a regular income—meager as it might be. In the period between 1997 and 2001 alone, the number of workers in the *maquiladoras* grew from some 800,000 to 1,240,000. But even before the current economic recession, industry could employ only a very small part of the rural population which was driven off its land. Now that valve has closed, with massive layoffs and plant closings throughout the country and in even bigger proportions near the border. According to the Universidad Obrera [Workers University], there were 810,000 layoffs in the country in 2001 alone, 310,000 of which took place in the *maquiladoras*. These layoffs have especially affected women workers, who constitute the majority of the labor force in the *maquiladoras*.

Economist

Factory workers in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. *Maquiladora* workers, predominantly women, face massive layoffs.

The NAFTA agreement came about as part of the worldwide capitalist offensive set off by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92, a huge defeat for workers which shaped the world we are still living in today. This is a world in which arrogant U.S. imperialism sees itself as omnipotent and struts around the world, missiles in hand, confident that it is not going to face any real opposition. In the absence of the powerful "common enemy" which U.S., Japanese and West European imperialists saw in the Soviet Union, the economic rivalries between them have come to the fore.

It is as part of this furious competition that U.S. imperialism needs to fence off its "backyard" (i.e., capitalist Mexico) economically, to keep its rivals out and prove that it is the only imperialist power that can plunder this territory at will. For a backward country like Mexico, trade liberalization in relation to an imperialist country like the U.S., with its highly advanced and productive agricultural industry, can only mean a death sentence by starvation for thousands of peasants and an even greater deepening of political subjugation and economic plunder. At the same time, "free competition" with the U.S. demands from Mexican capitalism an increase in its "competitiveness" campaign, which is the euphemism used by the spokesmen of capital to refer to their permanent war against unions and the gains the workers have won. It is precisely cheap labor and the brutal working conditions allowed in bourgeois Mexico that attract the rapacious capitalists in the U.S., Spain and other countries in the search for profits.

At the same time, the Mexican bourgeoisie desperately seeks to please its imperialist masters by selling off the nationalized industries to private enterprises. With the exception of electrical energy and oil, practically all of state industry has disappeared—Altos Hornos [steel company], Concarril [railroad company], the Fábrica Nacional de Máquinas-Herramientas [National Machine-Tool Factory], etc. The experience of Ferrocarriles Nacionales, which after privatization laid off four-fifths of its workers, is still fresh. Moreover, the horrifying crisis in Argentina, a country where key industries had been privatized, clearly shows where the IMF-mandated path leads—more than 60 percent of the population lives under the official poverty line! As an evocative poster issued by the SME said: "If privatizing is the cure, then why is Argentina in agony?"

We Marxists defend nationalized industry against the current privatizing onslaught, which is an attempt to increase the rate of exploitation of workers and the profits of the capitalists, especially in the context of the imperialists' plundering through NAFTA. The nationalization of the oil and the electrical industries was a blow against imperialism, and we are for the right of colonial and semicolonial countries to exploit their own natural resources. As Trotsky explained in "Mexico and British Imperialism" (1938) referring to the oil expropriation: "Expropriation is the only effective means of safeguarding national independence and the elementary conditions of democracy." In the end, the only way to achieve emancipation from the imperialists is to expropriate the *entire* bourgeoisie and to build a planned economy through socialist revolution.

As an international tendency, we Spartacists have opposed NAFTA from the beginning, just as we today oppose its intensification and its extension to the rest of Latin America in the form of the FTAA. It is not enough to "renegotiate" this or that clause, we must bring it down! When negotiations on the treaty started between the Carlos Salinas and Bush Sr. administrations in 1991, the sections of the International Communist League in Mexico, the United States and

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Young Spartacus

Racist Frame-Up in "New South"

Free Marcus Dixon!

act4justice.com

Marcus Dixon with father and brother.

In present-day America, where black and minority youth are routinely warehoused in deteriorating schools and face futures of minimum-wage jobs or unemployment, one might have said that black teenager Marcus Dixon was living proof of the vaunted "American Dream" story that is shoved down every school kid's throat. The high school senior had a 3.96 grade-point average, was a member of the National Honor Society and a football star and had earned a scholarship to prestigious Vanderbilt University. But the racist nightmare began for Dixon last February when he did what teenagers often do: he had consensual sex with a classmate. He was 18 and black; she was just shy of 16 and white. Now, he is sitting in a Georgia prison facing a minimum sentence of ***ten years with no hope of parole***, convicted of "aggravated child molestation." If his pending appeal to the Georgia Supreme Court made on January 21 fails, he will spend the rest of his young adulthood behind bars, leaving prison marked as an ex-felon, barred from the teaching career he had planned and permanently registered as a sex offender wherever he goes. The charge against him is appropriately known in Georgia as one of the "seven deadly sins," where the "first strike" mandates ten years without parole and the sentence for the "second strike" is life.

The girl, reportedly in mortal fear of her racist father, followed the well-worn path of accusing Dixon of rape. Dixon was originally indicted under six different Georgia statutes, but the jury found the sex so self-evidently consensual that they acquitted him of all but two charges. They kept the misdemeanor statutory rape charge for which consent is irrelevant, and also "child molestation" since one person was over 16 and the other was under—that's all the law requires. It was deemed "aggravated" because the girl was proclaimed to be a virgin, and breaking the highly prized hymen is considered an "injury." The D.A. said on TV that they threw in this charge as a kind of "backstop," in case the rape charges failed!

The so-called "New South" beats the same drums as the Old South, and in both the North and South the taboo combination of race and sex explosively exposes the inherent racist underpinnings of American capitalism. Memorials and tributes to the Southern slavocracy dot the landscape of Georgia, and Dixon's hometown of Rome boasts its own statue of none other than Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest, a founder and Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Dixon was adopted by a white family who were called "n----- lovers" for taking the child in. This adoption was an affront to white-supremacists, and so he was a target from Day One. His family also reported receiving threats from the very much alive local Ku Klux Klan during the course of the trial. Last spring, the day after a Rome church held a support rally for Dixon, the church building was trashed.

The hard lines drawn against sex between blacks and whites reflect the caste nature of racism in America. Not until 1967, 13 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, did the U.S. Supreme Court strike down "one drop" rules, which defined as black any person with "one drop" of "black blood," and the anti-miscegenation laws with the case of *Loving v. Virginia*. Georgia overturned their anti-miscegenation statutes in 1972 after a white Fort Benning soldier tried to marry a black woman, and the local judge refused to issue a marriage license. Alabama was the very last to abandon its provisions against interracial marriage—in November 2000. The 170-year-old Georgia law against "fornication" was just overturned in 2003! This law, which bans sex outside of marriage, was historically used primarily against mixed couples since the state never recognized them as married. These laws are the heritage of the grotesque myth of the "sacred Southern white woman" and the "black male rapist" that has been wielded with deadly lynch mob terror since the Civil War to seal in blood the continued oppression of the black masses. Dixon's case highlights the fact that blacks continue to be an oppressed race-color caste in America, forcibly segregated at the bottom of capitalist society but at the same time a strategic component of the working class. Even if you happen to escape poverty to be as successful as Michael Jackson, you will still spend your entire life parrying racist attacks and humiliations (see "Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson!" *WV* No. 818, 23 January).

Georgia's current governor, Sonny Perdue, was swept into office as the first Republican since Reconstruction, and his election victory was partly attributed to his support for a popular referendum on bringing back the state flag prominently featuring the "stars and bars" of the Confederacy. On January 20, a rally of Confederate diehards at the state capitol claimed that 43 legislators would support a new referendum to bring back the Dixie flag, symbol of slavery and racist reaction. Prominent in opposing the Confederate flag was Tyrone Brooks, a black Democratic Party state representative and Southern Christian Leadership Conference notable. But Brooks co-sponsored the legislation against "aggravated child molestation" that has put Marcus Dixon in prison. Brooks purportedly was disturbed that his law was used against Dixon and even admitted on *HBO Real Sports* that it was used to send a message to the black population, summarizing: "Young black boys better not have sexual relationships with young white girls." Brooks' despicable draconian molestation law is part of a whole new wave of anti-sex laws sweeping the country over the last couple of decades, and it set up this black youth just as surely as the whole history of anti-"race-mixing" legislation set up blacks for lynch law injustice for over a century.

The capitalist state with its courts and prisons is not "neutral," nor is it any kind of safeguard of youth in a racist class society. Rather it serves the interest of the ruling class by enforcing its class domination. Laws that limit access to abortion, encourage "abstinence only" anti-sex education and whip up hysteria about child molestation and pornography have as their sole purpose to discipline youth to grow up to be good, submissive foot soldiers in support of the racist capitalist status quo. The Republicans and Democrats are both parties of the capitalist class that uses racism to divide the working class, pitting white workers against black workers, thus obscuring the fact that they share a common enemy, the property-owning, profit-driven ruling class. Brooks' job, like that of other black Democrats, is to politically disarm those who struggle against racist reaction and funnel just outrage into the impotent electoral shell game.

Dixon's case is part of a whole history of demonization of black youth and conjures up not-too-distant memories of the infamous "Scottsboro Boys" case and the lynching of Emmett Till. The Scottsboro case began in 1931 when nine black teenagers riding on a train through Alabama were framed up for the rape of two white girls. The "respectable," legalistic NAACP shrank from defending the youths; and the Communist Party through its legal arm, the International Labor Defense, launched an international campaign to free them and stayed the hand of the executioner. The trials and appeals stretched on for years. Four of the young men were not released until 1937 and the others endured lengthy prison sentences.

Brown Brothers

ILD-led international campaign saved Scottsboro defendants—framed up on bogus charges of rape in 1931—from legal lynching.

Emmett Till was 14 years old in 1955 when he traveled from his home in Chicago to Mississippi to vacation. The youth dared to go into a store and allegedly flirted with a white woman. That night he was kidnapped from his cousin's home, shot through the head and dumped in the river tied to the metal fan of a cotton gin. His self-confessed murderers were tried and acquitted. Emmett Till's brave mother insisted that her child would have an open casket at the funeral so that his murder would be seared into the minds of all who hated this rotten racist system.

In 1958 in Monroe, North Carolina, a lesser-known horror story unfolded known as "The Kissing Case." It began when a six-year-old white girl excitedly told her mother that she had seen the nine-year-old son of her mother's black former housemaid and joyously kissed him on the cheek. The girl's mother called the police, and the two black children who had been playing with her were locked in the county jail incommunicado. One boy was sentenced to 12 years and the other boy to 14 years in prison. The mothers of the boys sought help from Robert F. Williams, president of the county NAACP. Williams was a well-known critic of the official NAACP and the pacifism of Martin Luther King Jr. because he packed a pistol and advocated and carried out armed self-defense against the Ku Klux Klan nightriders. Williams went all the way up to Roy Wilkins of the NAACP national office for help, but they would not touch the case. Williams then turned to the courageous black civil rights lawyer Conrad Lynn, whose legal office was called "the house of last resort" because he took cases that were unpopular or dangerous. Lynn recounts in his autobiography, *There Is a Fountain*, that when he approached Roy Wilkins, Wilkins replied, "Why do you want to represent those scum who are on welfare?" Lynn pursued what he could in the courts, but he knew what was key to freeing the children was to mobilize a mass outcry. The U.S. ruling class was particularly sensitive to international opinion during the Cold War since it needed to trumpet the U.S. as the "bastion of democracy" to counter the Soviet Union. After demonstrations in support of the children were held all over the world, in 1959 the federal government forced the state to release them.

Today the history of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s has been rewritten to make the pacifistic, legalistic strategy of the NAACP and Martin Luther King the official version, effectively disappearing Malcolm X, Williams and other militant fighters who were central to the struggle for black rights. This lie only serves to undermine the necessary understanding that it will take integrated working-class struggle to smash the racist capitalist system. Today police terrorize the ghettos, affirmative action is rolled back, re-segregated urban schools are turning into mass detention halls, and a stint in Iraq might look like a better job opportunity than stocking shelves at Wal-Mart. Marcus Dixon's case shows the fragility and reversibility of democratic rights as long as capitalist class rule exists. Black liberation can only be achieved through socialist revolution. Abolish reactionary "age of consent" laws! Free Marcus Dixon!■

Trotskyist Youth Intervene in Student Strikes at Berlin Universities

From mid-November until school let out for winter break, universities around Berlin were rocked by student strikes and protests against proposed budget cuts and tuition fees. In Berlin, the strikes have begun to taper off as the Senate, the city government run by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), moves ahead with its attacks on education. However, student strikes and protests are now erupting in Hamburg.

Throughout the strikes, workers, such as those of the Ver.di (United Public Services Union) and the GEW (Educators and Scientists Union), have supported the students. Our comrades of the Spartakist Youth, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, called on these unions to put their social power behind the students by walking out in solidarity.

Starting last week, the powerful IG Metall metal workers union has held multiple one- to two-hour-long "warning" strikes in anticipation of their own upcoming contract negotiations. A contingent of up to 50 students from Berlin universities marched from the school to the factory gates to join the striking workers in protest. Students should follow this example and look to ally with the working class.

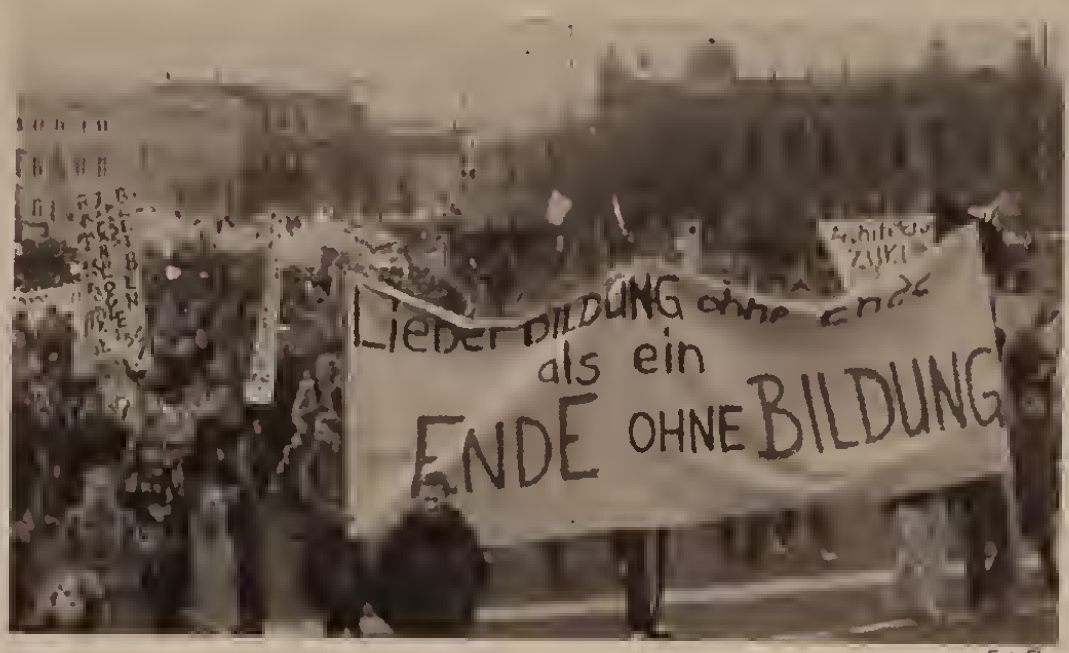
We publish below a translation of the Spartakist Youth leaflet (2 December 2003), originally headlined "Victory to the University Strikes! For Class Struggle Against the Capitalist SPD/PDS Senate!" The leaflet is reprinted in Spartakist *(No. 153, Winter 2003/2004).*

* * *

As anger mounts in Berlin over the SPD/PDS Senate's dismantling of social services, the developing student strikes at the three Berlin universities have become a focal point of protests in the last few weeks. These are the largest student protests in years. Many buildings have been occupied, and protests of various kinds happen almost every day. The Spartakist Youth have participated actively in these protests, defending picket lines and arguing among the students that not only are militant protests necessary, but also that it is necessary to link the strike with the social power of the working class. As part of a struggle for this perspective we presented the following resolution before the General Assembly [GA] of Humboldt University [HU] students on 26 November 2003:

> "The General Assembly resolves: These attacks are part of a broader wave of attacks by the capitalist SPD/Green government led on the front lines by the SPD/PDS Senate in Berlin. Instead of illusory appeals to the university president to improve his bargain with the Senate, we call for the mobilization of all those affected by the cutbacks—workers, unemployed, immigrants and students. The GA solidarizes with the protests by the BfA [Federal Insurance Institution for the Employed] workers against mass layoffs. The Humboldt administration has, in line with [SPD interior minister Otto] Schily's racist *Rasterfahndung* [a system of computerized "racial profiling" aimed at millions of mainly Muslim immigrants] and the 'war on terror,' criminally made available data on our fellow students of Arab or Muslim background. The universities should be run by those who work and study there!
>
> "We demand full citizenship rights for all who live here and free access to quality education for all, including a living stipend! Close the university down tight! For common action with the university workers and teaching staff, whose living standards are also in danger. The GA will send a delegation to the membership meeting of Ver.di CCM and CVK [university hospitals Charité at Mid-Campus and Charité at the Virchow Clinic Campus] on Thursday, 27 November 2003, with solidarity greetings from the HU students. The GA calls on Ver.di and the GEW to also strike. The families of all university employees should have full access to the scientific resources of the HU."

To underscore how distant this perspective is from the goals of the RefRat [Humboldt student parliament] "strike leadership," they bureaucratically suppressed our resolution. This motion was counterposed to the list of demands of the so-called "action council"—a reflection of the RefRat's preference for polite appeals to the SPD/PDS Senate and the HU administration. We protested strongly against this censorship. This act made clear that the supposedly pro-strike RefRat hates us communists, who were active in the strike, more than it does those opposed to the strike. Furthermore, it drew a political line: the RefRat tore the microphone away from our comrade precisely at the point when he spoke out against the *Rasterfahndung*, in the wake of the "war on terror," and against the university administration. At the end of 2001, HU president Jürgen Mlynek willingly made available data on students from 28 countries to the State Criminal Police in accordance with the racist *Rasterfahndung*. This political line doesn't come out of nowhere. The current RefRat has close connections to the so-called Hummel-Antifa [anti-fascists] and to the group Liberté Toujours, anti-Arab racists who have repeatedly stood out for their attacks on leftist and Palestinian groups and their public events. For example, the Hummel-Antifa openly called for preventing a 27 September 2003 demonstration against the occupation of Iraq and Palestine. These groups have attacked leftist and Palestinian public events many times [see "Germany: Apologists for Zionist Terror Attack Spartakist Youth Meeting," *Workers Vanguard* No. 806, 4 July 2003]. The group Liberté Toujours slanders the student strike as "anti-Semitic" on its Web page... while simultaneously receiving its mail under RefRat's address! These so-called "anti-Germans" are henchmen of Interior Minister Schily—their intent is to do his work at the universities, terrorizing leftists and students of Arab or Muslim background. ***Stop the attacks of the "anti-nationals/anti-Germans" against leftists and Palestinians!***



FotoFixx

Berlin, November 2003: Thousands of university students protest against education cutbacks, tuition fees. Banner reads: "Better Endless Education than an End Without Education."

Tobias Schwarz/AFP

Berlin, November 2003: Cops forcibly remove students occupying SPD city councilman's office.

Further evidence that the HU administration is not on the side of the students is the fact that right after the capitalist reunification of Germany, they hired *Sturmbannführer* [Nazi-era SS Stormtroops leader] Wilhelm Krelle. He was hired to rid the university of leftists and ex-DDR [East Germany] lecturers, which he then carried out, saying: "No Marxist will set foot over this threshold as long as I am here." For this he scandalously received an honorary PhD in 1994 from Green Party [Humboldt] university president Dürkop.

At the GAs, many students argued that one can pressure the [Berlin] Senate and [federal] government to change their priorities. But one has to understand that it is *necessary* for German imperialism to attack education and the "welfare state" in order to strengthen it against its imperialist rivals. There has been a rapid intensification of the rivalries between the imperialist powers since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the workers states in the DDR, East Europe and the USSR. This became especially obvious as fissures developed over the Iraq war between the imperialist axis of Paris-Berlin-Moscow and that of Washington-London. As revolutionary internationalists, we took a clear side in defense of semicolonial Iraq against U.S. imperialism. We said: "Opposition to imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!" This is counterposed to the open support for "peace chancellor" [Gerhard] Schröder offered by the liberal antiwar movement of the social-democratic trade-union bureaucracy, the PDS and their left tails like Linksruck [of the International Socialist Tendency, formerly aligned with the International Socialist Organization in the U.S.]. That support meant nothing

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Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m.

February 12: **The Russian Question Pointblank: Afghanistan and Polish Solidarność**

University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, 5811 S. Ellis Ave., Room 204
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

TORONTO

Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

February 26: **The Spanish Revolution: The Betrayals of Stalinism and Anarchism and the Trotskyist Alternative**

York University Student Centre
Room 311C
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

LOS ANGELES

Alternate Saturdays, 2 p.m.

February 7: **The Economics of Communism**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m.

February 10: **Black Oppression—Bedrock of American Capitalism: The Fight for Revolutionary Integrationism and Socialist Revolution**

Columbia University
Fayerweather, Room 302
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

Students Pass Spartakist Motion Condemning Anti-Strike Slanders

Humboldt University, Berlin

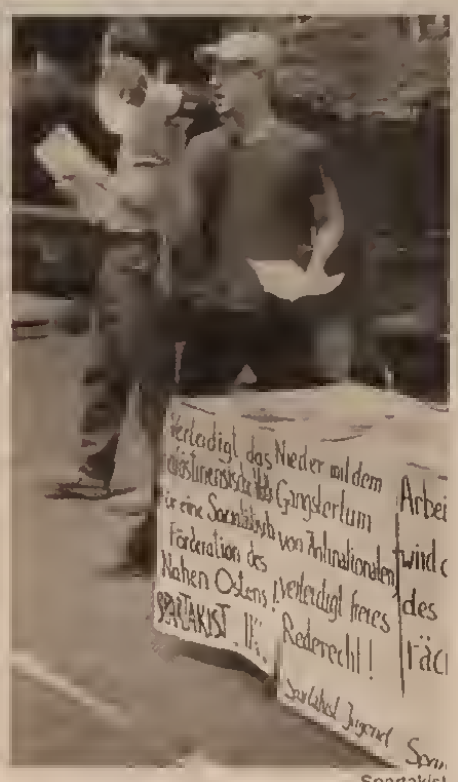
We print below a translation of a Spartakist Youth article from Spartakist *(No. 153, Winter 2003/2004).*

* * *

Threatened by the capitalist SPD/PDS Senate's plan to impose tuition fees, which would force many to drop out of school, students at the Berlin universities last November decided to strike. Already many students have to slave away at various part-time jobs just to keep their heads above water. And as if it weren't enough to be bassled by strikebreaking students and professors demanding class work, yet another enemy has entered the fray. In a May 2003 leaflet, the "anti-German" group Liberté Toujours denounced student protesters as being driven by a "crazed anti-Semitism." In their latest tirade from November, they go so far as to assert that the logic of the strikers would lead to attacks on synagogues. Monstrously, they rail that the protest statements of the students display "fascistic tendencies."

We don't know if Liberté Toujours has ever dared to hand out these leaflets to strikers, but anyone can look at these provocateurs' intellectual outpourings on their Web page. This group is part of the "Krähenfuss Collective," a café at HU [Humboldt University] that is linked to the RefRat [Humboldt student parliament]. During their bar shifts, this group tried to turn the café into a hangout for strikebreakers. Thus, for example, they refused to serve coffee to student strike pickets on Friday, December 5. Horrified students had to listen to these gangsters calling them "anti-Semites." Only after furious protests and the intervention by members of the strike "action council" did Liberté Toujours give in.

Particularly now, with the growth of angry protests by students and working people against the SPD/Green [federal] government's plans for slashing social benefits, these people are emerging from their rat holes to cast vile slanders against those driven onto the streets out of fear of losing their means of subsistence. These "anti-Germans" are attempting to squash the urgently necessary social protest, thereby acting in the interest of the ruling class. The "anti-German" provocations are a direct threat to all students fighting for their education and future in opposition to the plans of the capitalist SPD/PDS Senate. By their various attacks on leftist events, these people have shown that they aren't just being provocative but pose a real threat. On 3 July 2003, for example, they attacked one of our forums at HU, entitled "Defend the Palestinian People!",



June 2003: Spartakist Youth speak out against attack by "anti-national" thugs at Humboldt.

with a smoke bomb. The "anti-Germans" are, however, known above all for their verbal and physical attacks on Palestinians and other immigrants of Arab or Muslim background.

To protest against the anti-strike witchhunting by the "anti-Germans," the Spartakist Youth introduced the following resolution at the 3 December 2003 General Assembly of Humboldt University:

> "The 'anti-German' group Liberté Toujours, which operates out of the office of the RefRat, is slandering our strike as 'anti-Semitic.' The General Assembly of HU students of 3 December 2003 decisively rejects this dirty slander. The GA stands opposed to every form of racism and anti-Semitism and demands full citizenship rights for all who live here."

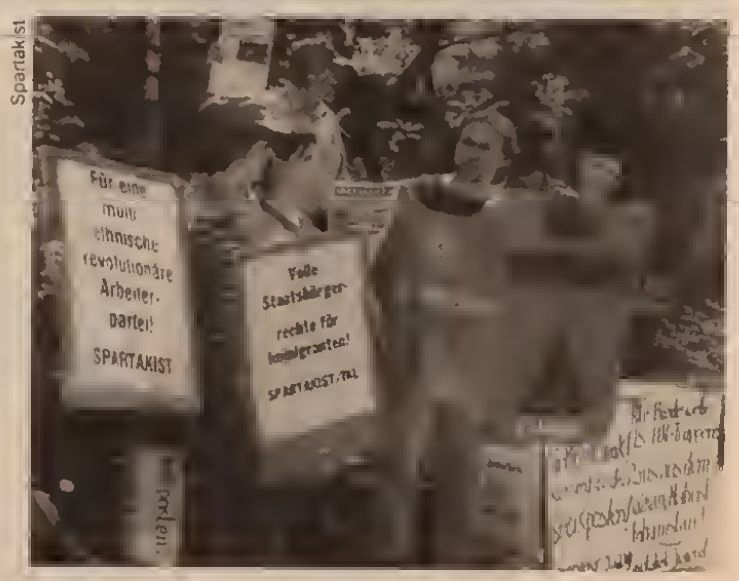
Although the RefRat—at whose address Liberté Toujours receives their mail—bureaucratically put off the vote, the resolution was ultimately passed by a clear majority. Now that the "anti-German" slander has been rejected by the GA, the task of further isolating these provocateurs is posed. If university students want to win their fight against the dismantling of the "welfare state" by the SPD/PDS Senate, they have to oppose the mudslinging campaign of the "anti-German" agents of Schily, [SPD Berlin finance minister Thilo] Sarrazin and [PDS Berlin minister of science, research and culture Thomas] Flierl.

Germany...

(continued from page 5)

other than sowing chauvinist illusions that German imperialism—responsible for two world wars and the Holocaust and with occupation troops today in the Balkans and Afghanistan—is a force for peace. This "national unity" behind the SPD/Green government paved the way for Schröder's brutal program to dismantle the "welfare state" (his "Agenda 2010").

During the university strikes of 1997, the RefRat bureaucrats channeled the protests into electioneering for the SPD and PDS, aiming to replace the CDU/FDP [Christian Democratic Union/Free Democratic Party] government. Now that these bureaucrats have gotten what they wanted, they are seeking to disappear the role these social-democratic parties have played. In fact, an SPD/PDS-run Senate is a more effective instrument for pushing through austerity measures, since the PDS, in particular, is seen as a "leftist" party representing the interests of workers and the oppressed. It is necessary to emphasize that the SPD and PDS are bourgeois workers parties—meaning that while they have a working-class base, they have pro-capitalist leaderships. In February 1990, the PDS was screaming "Germany, one Fatherland!" just like [then Chancellor Helmut] Kohl and the SPD, thereby doing their bit to cast the DDR deformed workers state—born from the victory of the Red Army over the Nazi regime—back into the jaws of the German bourgeoisie. Today, the PDS has ministers in the capitalist government, who are railroading through the attacks on the gains of the working class. In 1989-90, we were the only organization that sought to build a revolutionary leadership in the fight against capitalist reunification and for a red Germany of workers councils (soviets). Today, we want to win leftist students to our perspective of breaking the working class from their social-democratic misleaders and building a multiethnic revolutionary workers party.



Spartakist Youth hold rally at Berlin Technical University in solidarity with IG Metall strike, May 2003.

As communists, we intervene not only for increased militancy in struggles, but also to convey how such struggles can be won. Success necessitates a fight against false and backward consciousness. The SAV [German section of the Taaffeite Committee for a Workers' International] stands in contrast to this. They may sound pretty militant, calling for a one-day general strike and for the founding of a new workers party. But at the same time, they practice the crassest form of class betrayal; in the last issue of their paper they repeatedly speak positively about the cop "union" (GdP) in Hessen [a German state]—pointing to this as a progressive force against the cutbacks being pushed by the government. But when, on 26 November 2003, the cops surrounded almost 200 economics students in front of the Reichstag [parliament building], the role of police during strikes became absolutely clear. Now these students are threatened with fines of up to €10,000 [about $11,000]. Or think about the arrests and beatings of students in Hamburg on 27 November 2003. The police are part of the capitalist state, the armed fist of the ruling class. They carry out racist deportations, attack leftist demonstrations and break strikes. As V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution of 1917, explained in *State and Revolution*, the working class cannot simply appropriate the existing state apparatus as its own; that apparatus must be smashed and replaced by the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. In contrast to the SAV, we fight for the independence of the workers movement from the capitalist state and demand: ***Cops out of the DGB [German Trade Union Federation]!*** The SAV's hailing of the police demonstrates its reformist faith that the capitalist state can be utilized in the interest of the working people. Thus, it is clear what their "new workers party" would look like: another social-democratic obstacle to class struggle. What is urgently needed is a revolutionary workers party to fight for a socialist society in which free education for all is a reality and the social causes of war, women's oppression, racism and anti-Semitism are overcome. Join the Spartakist Youth! ■

Spartakist

Publication of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany

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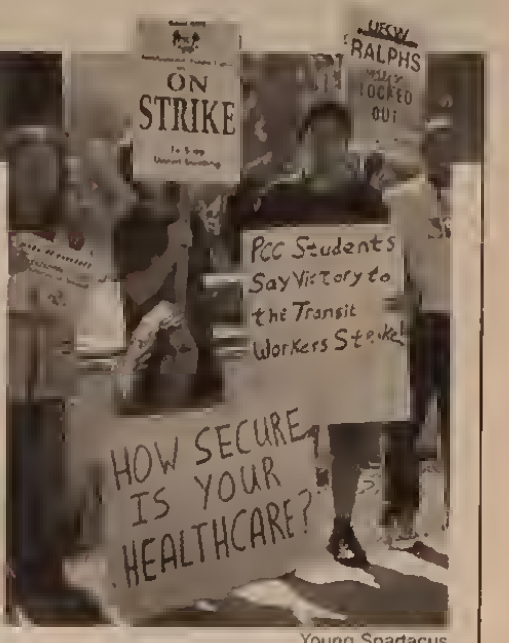
SPARTAKIST 4
Peters/Bsirske haben den Kampf gegen Agenda 2010 verraten!
Wir brauchen eine revolutionäre multiethnische Arbeiterpartei!
Brecht mit der Sozialdemokratie – SPD und PDS!

Students: Take a Side!

Support UFCW Strike! Donate Now!



Young Spartacus

SYC and Pasadena City College students at UFCW picket location in Pasadena, October 2003.

Since October, 70,000 supermarket workers organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union in Southern California have been locked in a strike battle against the rapacious Vons, Albertsons and Ralphs bosses. The bosses' campaign to slash health care coverage and drive down the wages and living standards of the heavily immigrant UFCW members to the poverty level imposed on employees of the miserable non-union Wal-Mart is emblematic of what working people around the country face. The Spartacus Youth Clubs call on students and youth who hate exploitation and oppression to join us in supporting the striking workers. Their fight is our fight!

The capitalist rulers are engaged in an all-out assault on working people and the oppressed—they're shredding democratic rights and targeting immigrants, black people and labor under the guise of the "war on terror"; there are massive cutbacks in education; layoffs are mounting and a generation of minority youth are being criminalized and incarcerated. From the bloody U.S. military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan to the cop sieges of the Los Angeles black community and Miami anti-FTAA protesters, it is the capitalists who are carrying out a war of terror. A victory by the UFCW would be a blow against the same vicious ruling class behind this global onslaught. It is vitally necessary for all those who want to fight capitalist reaction to come to the aid of the UFCW strikers.

Unions across the country are raising funds for the striking workers. The SYCs appeal to youth nationwide to show their solidarity by donating money to help the striking workers pay rent, feed their families and remain on the picket lines so that they can hold out and win. We urge you to contribute! Where UFCW pickets are up, youth should help man the picket lines, as the Los Angeles SYC and youth we have brought along are doing.

The capitalist rulers would have you believe that you can change society for the better by deciding which of their representatives—Democrat or Republican—will oversee the repression and exploitation of the working masses for the next four years from the White House. What a charade! This illusion is echoed by the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats, who chain the workers to the class enemy. Gains for working people, black people, immigrants, women and all the oppressed have never been won except through hard struggle. If students are to have any hope of a decent future, they must ally themselves with the working class, which uniquely has the social power to bring the capitalist system to its knees. We fight to win students and young workers to the perspective of building the revolutionary workers party essential to the victory of socialist revolution, which alone can lay the material basis for the elimination of exploitation, oppression, racism and war.

The SYCs say: Victory to the UFCW strike! Show your solidarity—every dollar counts! All money collected by the SYCs will go to the UFCW strike fund. Make donations by contacting the local Spartacus Youth Clubs or by sending a check or money order to the Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, earmarked "UFCW Strike Fund."

UFCW...

(continued from page 12)

the UFCW and Teamsters tops ordered that the UFCW picket lines at the nine distribution centers that service the struck Southern California supermarkets be taken down. A militant refusal by the Teamsters and UFCW ranks to abide by this, in particular at the Vons distribution center in El Monte, forced the bureaucrats to temporarily keep up picketing at the four Vons distribution centers. Today, UFCW strikers are defiantly picketing the El Monte distribution center.

After taking down the Ralphs lines, the UFCW leadership sent picketers from Southern California to the north to man "informational picket lines" at Safeway stores, pushing a halfhearted "shop out" as a diversion from extending the strike. While the UFCW and AFL-CIO tops have simply been paying lip service to the "shop out," the workers leafleting both Safeway and Albertsons in the Bay Area are actually serious about implementing this tactic. We call on everyone to boycott Safeway (and its subsidiary, Pak'N Save) and Albertsons as an elementary act of solidarity with the UFCW strikers, whether there are pickets at the stores or not.

The supermarket workers are facing an enemy that wants blood. Demanding a full $1 billion in heath care concessions, the supermarket bosses rejected an offer by the UFCW conceding up to $500 million. They want nothing less than to crush the UFCW as a union capable of defending its members. They want to treat their workers like notoriously anti-union Wal-Mart treats its workers—low pay, token benefits, intimidation and abuse of immigrant workers, victimization of union activists, etc. A UFCW victory would be a powerful springboard to organizing Wal-Mart, the largest private employer in the U.S.

The viciousness of the grocery bosses is revealed by the scabs they have enlisted. On January 17, two women strikers at an Albertsons in Orange County were attacked by a scab, who punched one of them repeatedly in the face and broke the 52-year-old woman's nose. In the next few days, there were a number of similar incidents particularly targeting women strikers. UFCW Local 324 president Greg M. Conger said, "The scabs who work at these supermarkets are, by their very nature, desperate people of suspicious moral character. Some of them have a history of violence and theft." Indeed, Ralphs and other grocery giants have engaged professional scab-recruiting outfits like Personnel Support Systems Inc., which is owned by one Clifford L. Nuckols, a low-life who was sued for swindling the scabs he recruited.

The UFCW strike is the front line of a fight that needs to be waged by all of labor in defense of health care benefits and against the undermining of unions through the imposition of multi-tier divisions within the workforce. And the rest of labor must back them all the way. Trade unions located where the UFCW strike is happening must officially mobilize their members to help build mass picket lines that no one dares to cross. Every worker—unionized and non-unionized—black people, immigrants and all the oppressed have a stake in this strike.

Mobilize Labor Power to Win!

Despite the treachery of the labor tops—the failure to pull out UFCW workers at the struck chains nationally, the taking down of lines at Ralphs, the dismantling of lines at the distribution centers—the strike has been seriously hurting the grocery bosses; they have lost an estimated $1 billion and Smith Barney is now recommending that its clients sell their Safeway stock. However, the strike is also taking a toll on the strikers—health care benefits have expired for many UFCW workers, and many have also fallen behind on their car and housing payments while struggling to put food on the table for themselves and their families. Despite these hardships, the overwhelming majority of UFCW strikers have demonstrated their determination to fight and win. At the January 31 rally, a UFCW Local 770 worker carried a placard reading, "I'm Tired and I'm Broke but I'll Never Be 'Broken'."

In the AFL-CIO fund-raising campaign on behalf of the strike, $600,000 has been donated. ILWU locals in the L.A. area—13, 63 and 94—have pledged over $1 million for medical insurance for the strikers and their families. At a January 12 "stop work" meeting, ILWU Local 13 members voted unanimously to assess themselves $25 per month to assist the grocery workers; Local 13 has also issued 100 temporary casual cards to allow UFCW strikers to get work on the docks through the union hiring hall. The Harry Bridges Institute, named after the historic leader of the ILWU, has launched an Adopt-A-UFCW-Family program to help the neediest UFCW families pay their rent, electricity and heating bills. At the January 31 rally, a steamfitters official said building trades District 36 had given $70,000 to the grocery workers, while the UTLA teachers union has raised $37,000 thus far, and the SEIU International has pledged $100,000. Checks have also come in from trade unions in Canada, Ireland, Japan, Germany, Denmark and other countries.

All militant workers must do everything in their power to throw their unions' support behind the UFCW strike—through financial donations *and* especially through building effective, mass picket lines. This is also an opportunity for students and young activists to show their solidarity with the strikers by donating money and helping to man the picket lines. The

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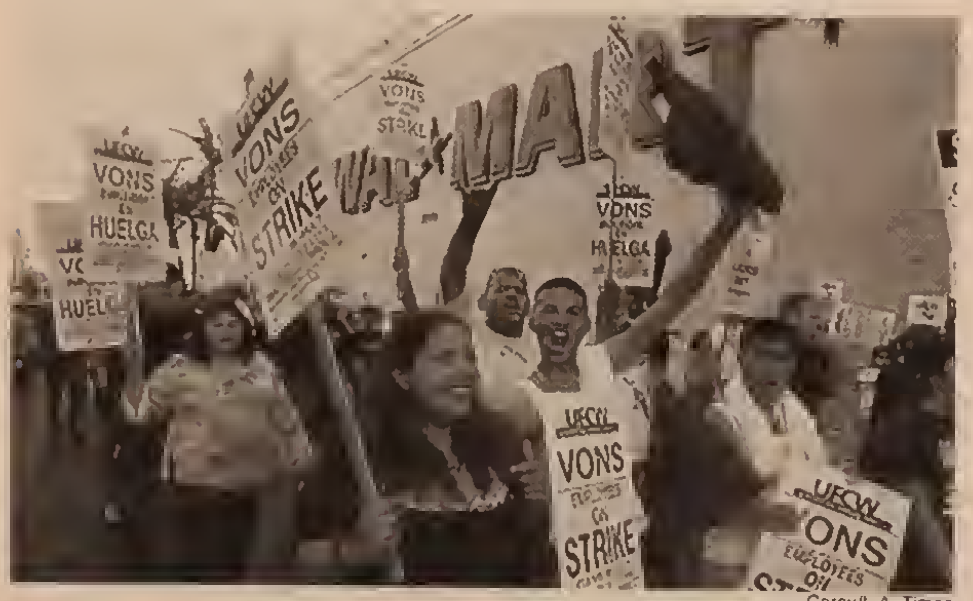


Carey/L.A. Times

Oxnard, October 2003: Five hundred strikers and supporters marched from rally at Vons supermarket to nearby outlet of anti-union Wal-Mart chain.

Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Grocery Workers Struggle: Which Way Forward?

Thursday, February 12, 5:15 p.m.
Meet at Malcolm X Plaza
San Francisco State University

For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

SAN FRANCISCO

UFCW...

(continued from page 7)

Spartacus Youth Clubs, youth groups of the Marxist Spartacist League, have launched a campaign in solidarity with the UFCW strike (see article on page 7).

The AFL-CIO ought to be doing everything they can to ensure that every striking UFCW worker can pay their rent, utilities and food bills. Such a campaign must be carried out as an ***auxiliary*** to effective strike action, especially through nationwide ***extension*** of the strike. But the aim of the labor tops is to use the much-needed financial support as a substitute for the class-struggle tactics necessary to win the strike. The AFL-CIO is engaging in an impotent "corporate campaign," appealing to the capitalist bosses to act more "humanely" toward the UFCW strikers. Fat chance! The bankruptcy of this tactic is demonstrated by the fact that when the AFL-CIO organized a rally on behalf of the strike in New York City, they organized it on...Wall Street! Richard Trumka, the AFL-CIO's secretary-treasurer and one of the key figures running the national campaign on behalf of the UFCW strike, is a former president of the coal miners union who rose through the ranks of the bureaucracy by taming the militant tradition of the miners, pushing impotent schemes to pressure shareholders and civil disobedience as a substitute for effective, militant strike action.

For a Workers Government!

The UFCW strike takes place in the post-September 11 period in which the U.S. bourgeoisie, having invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, is also taking aim at the working class and minorities at home. Here in Los Angeles in recent weeks the ruling-class offensive has been demonstrated not only in the attacks on the UFCW. On January 21, more than 400 LAPD officers and FBI agents carried out a racist police occupation of the Nickerson Gardens housing project in Watts, arresting 41 people and terrorizing the residents in the name of fighting "gangs." Meanwhile, the County of Los Angeles is dismantling piece by piece the King/Drew Medical Center, a vital if insufficient lifeline for the impoverished black and Latino masses of South Central L.A.

As we have repeatedly said, the imperialists' phony "war on terror" targets immigrants, blacks and labor. This was confirmed in December when the union-busting CEO of Safeway, Steve Burd, was appointed by Tom Ridge to the Private Sector Senior Advisory Committee to Homeland Security. A January 27 "Grocery Workers Justice Pilgrimage" to give petitions to Burd at his home, organized by Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, was subjected to police intimidation. Two officers from the Contra Costa County sheriff's homeland security detail showed up at a nearby union hall in Martinez demanding information on the march, and a police mobilization prevented the marchers from entering the gated community where Burd lives. The same two cops then carried out undercover surveillance at a January 24 union rally in San Francisco (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28 January).

The January 31 mass labor demonstration in Inglewood took place a day after a mistrial was declared for a second time in the case of the racist Inglewood cop whose beating of black teenager Donovan Jackson in 2002 was captured on videotape. That video showed what happens all the time in racist capitalist America. The courts, cops and prisons are not neutral; they are instruments of capitalist repression, the core of the capitalist state. The cops who carry out racist terror against blacks and immigrants are the same cops who arrest striking workers. To fight for the rights of labor and the oppressed requires an understanding of the nature of the capitalist state as an apparatus of repression to defend the interests of the capitalist class against working people and the oppressed.

The unions are disarmed by the trade-union misleaders' acceptance of the capitalist system of profit, their acceptance of the labor laws issued by the capitalist government and capitalist courts, and by a program of class collaboration with the capitalists, expressed chiefly through political support for the Democratic Party.

The money that the unions have donated in support of the strike is a drop in the bucket compared to the millions they waste every year trying to get Democrats elected into office. At the January 31 rally, Democrat and California District Attorney Bill Lockyer spoke from the podium and was widely applauded when he announced that he was charging the supermarket chains with violating "anti-trust" laws. Lockyer represents the capitalist state, the very forces that would go after the strikers if, for example, the UFCW and Teamsters defied the bosses' laws and injunctions and shut down the distribution centers.

The starting point for any union leadership worth its salt must be the understanding that capitalist society is divided between two antagonistic classes: workers, who produce all material value in society and are forced to sell their labor power in order to survive, and the capitalist class, which owns the means of production and extracts its profits from the exploitation of the working class. The interests of these two classes cannot be reconciled. As Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon wrote at the time of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strike in the *Organizer*, the daily strike bulletin put out by the union:

> "Local 574 doesn't take any stock in the theory that capital and labor are brothers, and that the way for little brother labor to get a few crumbs is to be a good boy and appeal to the good nature of big brother capital. We see the issue between capital and labor as an unceasing struggle between the class of exploited workers and the class of exploiting parasites. It is a war. What decides in this war, as in all others, is power. The exploiters are organized to grind us down into the dust. We must organize our class to fight back."
>
> —"The Secret of Local 574," 18 August 1934, reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (1958)

The unions need a class-struggle leadership based on the political independence of the labor movement from the bosses' state and political parties. It is in the crucible of class struggle that such a leadership will be forged, as part of the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party to lead the working masses to power. The workers produce the wealth of society—they should run it!

The struggle of this determined, militant union, with its heavily immigrant and minority components, expresses the aspirations of what working people and the masses of the oppressed and victimized in this country are fighting for: decent wages, a decent job and health care for themselves and their families. This is a major class battle for workers in America, and every worker has a stake in the outcome of this strike.

The capitalist system means immiseration, unemployment, union-busting, racial oppression and war. Militant workers must understand that they have to get at the root cause of their oppression; that, to be liberated from capitalist enslavement, their struggles must be directed toward the building of a workers party to lead the workers in the fight for a workers government. As Karl Marx wrote in his 1865 work *Wages, Price and Profit*, in their everyday conflict with capital, workers

> "ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, '*A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!*' they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, '*Abolition of the wages system!*'"

Victory to the UFCW strike! ■

Stansbury...

(continued from page 12)

This racist police killing was no aberration—we will not forget Timothy Stansbury Jr.; Amadou Diallo, shot at 41 times; 57-year-old black trade unionist Alberta Spruill; African immigrant worker Ousmane Zongo; and all other victims of police terror. These killings are part and parcel of the police violence that is systematically employed against the black population under racist American capitalism, where all young black men are treated as criminals under the guise of the "war on drugs." This can only intensify as the so-called "war on terror" is brought home with a vengeance, targeting immigrants, blacks and the whole labor movement, tearing up rights that have been won through decades of militant struggle.

The cops can't be reformed—not with "more black cops," not with civilian review board watchdogs, not with any kind of "community control," for the simple reason that they are the armed fist of a ruling class whose profits are derived from the exploitation of labor and the racist oppression of blacks, immigrants and all minorities. There will be no end to police brutality without getting rid of the capitalist state—with its entire apparatus of cops, prisons, courts and armies—through workers revolution. What is needed is to mobilize the power of the multiracial working class in struggle against the capitalist exploiters and their state terror, in defense of immigrants and the ghetto poor and indeed against the whole capitalist system.

Timothy Stansbury Jr. did everything they tell you to do—he was working at a local McDonald's, had acquired his GED and also had aspirations of attending college one day. But his is a generation that the capitalist class deems a surplus population for whom there are no jobs, only prison hellholes or being used as cannon fodder in brutal imperialist wars like Iraq. Black and Latino youth today face armed guards in their schools, cops patrolling the housing projects where they live, daily harassment, and are targeted under the guise of the so-called "war on drugs." "We're staring down the barrel of guns every day," said a resident of the Louis Armstrong Houses. Racism is fundamental to American capitalism. The shooting of Timothy Stansbury Jr. by the cops starkly exemplifies the daily treatment meted out to the black population in the ghettos, which are run like huge prison complexes.

WV Photo

Labor Black League for Social Defense at 9 February 1999 NYC protest against racist police killing of Amadou Diallo.

Black Democrat Charles Barron rightly calls Timothy Stansbury's death a "cold-blooded killing," while he tells people to beg this rotten system for "justice." Barron has recently declared himself a Democratic Party candidate for mayor, flaunting his Black Panther past. But militants like the early Panthers and especially Malcolm X powerfully condemned any reliance on the Democrats, and they called for armed self-defense for the masses. And they were right. The Democrats and Republicans just represent different wings of the ruling class. Giving lip service to the fight against black oppression and making speeches against the Iraq war makes Charles Barron that much more effective in channeling the justified outrage right back into the dead end of bourgeois electoral politics. Barron wholly embraces the Democratic Party as a vehicle to advance his agenda, acting to keep the outrage in check and safely tied to the system.

The labor misleaders divert any struggle with calls to "vote Democrat" and for "reforming" the racist NYPD, like the UFT, which outrageously calls for even more cops in ghetto schools. Following the Diallo shooting, when thousands of working people, unionists, students and youth protested, the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Spartacist League said: "Massive protest and strike action by New York's powerful and integrated working class—transit, hospital, city and hotel workers—would give an organized political expression and social power to the outrage of the inner cities against cop terror." Such a protest, based on the organized muscle of the labor movement, would have given the cops and their capitalist masters some pause. This was directly counterposed to what black Democrat Al Sharpton and the labor bureaucrats did—they mobilized on behalf of the capitalist class. One-time FBI fink Sharpton even called for a pay raise for the cops as part of a so-called "reform" of the police. Breaking the working class away from their illusions in the Democratic Party is key to unleashing the power of labor. Cops out of the unions!

Black liberation can only be achieved through fighting against the foundations of the capitalist system and the building of an egalitarian socialist society. In American class society, black people are forcibly segregated at the bottom, yet form a strategic part of the working class. The interests of the working class are inseparably linked to the defense of black and Latino youth of the ghettos and barrios and to the fight for black freedom. What is required is the mobilization of the multiracial working class, the only class which has the social power to shatter the bloody rule of the most violent ruling class in history, and link these struggles to the justified outrage of the ghetto population. The Labor Black League joins in the fight to build a multiracial, class-struggle workers party that can lead the American working class in the coming socialist revolution. Finish the Civil War!

—1 February 2004

Mexico...

(continued from page 3)

Canada published an internationalist statement of opposition to the treaty (see "Stop U.S. 'Free Trade' Rape of Mexico," *Workers Vanguard* No. 530, 5 July 1991). Taking as a starting point the indivisible interest of the world proletariat, the statement explains:

> "Far from 'freeing' trade internationally, the pact is aimed at setting up a private hunting preserve for the American imperialist bourgeoisie, their Canadian junior partners and their lackeys in the Mexican ruling class. Already at the time of the First World War, Lenin noted that the narrow limits of the capitalist nation-state had become a fetter on the development of the productive forces, producing a struggle over redivision of the world. The various 'common markets' in no way overcome this, but instead intensify interimperialist rivalries. We Trotskyists, communists, struggle for the economic integration of the world on a socialist basis. But the FTA [Free Trade Agreement] is a reactionary move toward global trade war (and from there to a shooting war). The trade pact with Mexico is U.S. imperialism's answer to the Fourth Reich and Japan Inc."

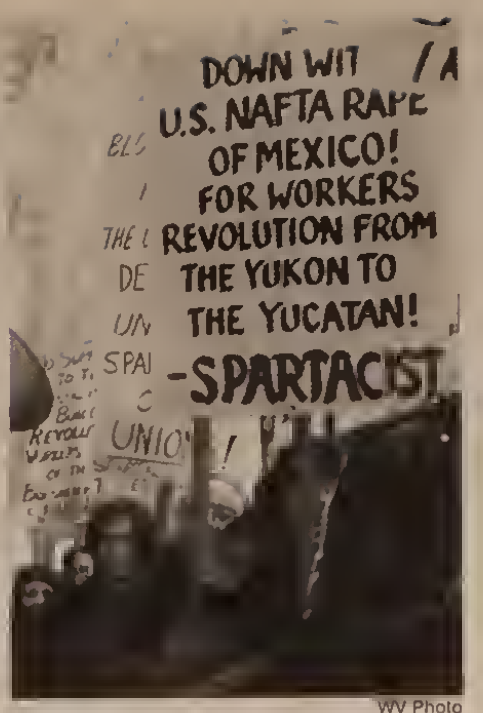
To fight against privatizations and NAFTA, it is necessary to mobilize the *social power* of the working class: ***For workers mobilizations to stop NAFTA and the FTAA!***

For Workers Revolution! For a Socialist Federation of the Americas!

The history of Latin American capitalism has been one of constant swings between populist protectionism and nationalist rhetoric on the one hand and "free market" trade liberalization on the other. Alternatively, the bourgeoisie of these countries, frightened by the unrest of the masses, resorts to populism and protects its industry with tariff barriers and subsidies. Then, under the political pressure of imperialism and because of its own internal inefficacy, this model fails. The bourgeoisie, handing over the economy to the imperialists, resorts again to "free market" liberalism, which in a few years fails, too, as it destroys the internal market and condemns the masses to even greater impoverishment, and then the cycle begins again. The rise of bourgeois rulers with populist rhetoric like Chávez in Venezuela and the social democrat Lula in Brazil points to the latter. The only constants in this inhuman wheel of fortune are imperialist subjugation and the human misery of millions of peasants and workers.

Mexico is a backward capitalist country, politically and economically dependent on the U.S. imperialists. Throughout the last few decades, there has been massive investment of imperialist capital. This has translated into uneven and combined development; the age-old conditions of subjugation in the countryside co-exist with a modern industrial infrastructure and, correspondingly, with a young, powerful and dynamic urban proletariat. Most of those modern industries which have been built on Mexican soil do not belong to a correspondingly developed national bourgeoisie but to foreign imperialism (in large part, the U.S.). That's why the national bourgeoisie in countries like Mexico controls state power but is socially weak and condemned to live dependent on its imperialist masters, confronting at the same time a modern and powerful proletariat and a mass of discontented peasants in its own territory.

Unlike the old peasantry, the modern working class has a direct relationship to the most dynamic and productive means of production (and of creation of profits) in society: it has, therefore, the social power needed to successfully engage in the struggle to emancipate all the exploited and oppressed. It is this modern industrial proletariat, created as a result of capitalist investment and thirst for profits, which can become capitalism's gravedigger. Ultimately, the national bourgeoisie fears the mobilization of its "own" masses much more than it does its imperialist masters.



WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated NYC protest in defense of Mexican UNAM student strike, February 2000.

But if the subordination of the PAN [National Action Party] rulers to the dictates of the U.S. is frank and well known, there are other capitalist forces with nationalist ideology which present themselves as an alternative to this blatant subjugation and propose a subjugation with more "dignity." This is the case of the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], founded by former PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] leaders like Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who opposed the "neo-liberal" turn of the PRI in the 1980s.

Today, PRD government officials grant minimal measures of social welfare in the states they rule (like López Obrador's subsidies to older adults in the D.F. [Mexico City]) which, in contrast to the outright anti-popular measures of the PAN governments (like the increase in the IVA [value-added tax]), make them look like friends of the masses. From the outset this nationalist party has been a pole of attraction for all the reformist "left," which dreams of a bourgeois nationalist solution to the most urgent democratic demands. But the PRD is nothing other than a bourgeois party committed to the perpetuation of capitalist rule. That is why it cannot question the subordination of Mexico to U.S. imperialism either.

This has been explicitly reflected in the PRD's stand regarding NAFTA, which this party *does not oppose*, limiting itself to calling for the renegotiation of the agricultural chapter on less unfavorable terms. When the treaty was signed in 1991, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas talked about a fantastical "alternative agreement" on free trade with imperialism which would include a "social charter" and "common standards for labour, social and environmental rights" (*Canadian Tribune*, 21 January 1991). Cárdenas offers his bourgeois populist politics as a more feasible way to create a "convergence of national interests" with the Yankee imperialists, because "only a Mexican government with...impeccable nationalist credentials" can get the working class to accept its "share" of the burden (*Foreign Policy*, Spring 1990).

These politics are not the product of a covert betrayal or the corruption of a given leader, but rather are the necessary and inescapable logic of their class character. Although the PRD occasionally uses popular mobilizations the better to position itself in its competition against its bourgeois rivals, this party has shown all too well that it is perfectly willing to suppress any attempt by the oppressed to rebel against the injustice endemic to capitalism. Thus, the PRD government of Mexico City systematically repressed the demonstrations of the 1999-2000 student strike in defense of free education, repeatedly tried to derail it through political means, and eventually supported the reactionary "referendum" which the campus authorities used to "justify" the brutal repression of 6 February 2000, besides sending its own riot police to support the Federal Preventive Police in breaking the strike. This is the government which ordered the bloody eviction of the Xochimilco residents [squatters on government land] last fall. Today, the Mexico City government has gone as far as asking for the advice of racist pig Rudolph Giuliani, who as New York mayor became famous for his state-of-siege police measures. This included the famous case of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed, innocent African immigrant who died riddled with 41 shots at the hands of Giuliani's police—this is what his famous "zero tolerance" means!

Many young activists have through repeated beatings lost their illusions that the PRD itself can act as a genuine champion of the interests of the oppressed. But in the absence of a militant and prominent workers movement many continue to look hopefully toward peasant organizations like the EZLN or the *ejidatarios* of Atenco [peasants who resisted government attempts to displace them in order to build an airport], hoping they will act as the core of a popular resistance movement. For such activists, the proletariat is only one more oppressed sector, or, in any case, a potentially useful ally. The absence of a militant workers movement that could attract the thousands of youth who now look to the Zapatistas as a leadership underlines the reactionary role of the current pro-capitalist leaderships of the union movement.

Actually, the peasantry on its own does not have the social weight or the objective interest to become the vanguard of broad emancipation. That is why it is destined to politically follow one of the two fundamental classes in modern urban society: the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. In the context of a direct confrontation between the working class and the bourgeoisie, the poor peasants can be an important ally of the proletariat. But, as the experience of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 showed, in the absence of an independently mobilized proletariat, the peasant movement is doomed to return to the orbit of bourgeois politics (see "Un análisis marxista de la Revolución Mexicana de 1910" [A Marxist Analysis of the 1910 Mexican Revolution], *Espartaco* No. 12, Spring-Summer 1999).

A contemporary example is the EZLN guerrilla organization which, throughout its history, has systematically followed the leadership of the PRD at every nationally relevant political conjuncture (like the elections). Despite its recent and justified denunciation of the PRD for having voted in favor of the infamous "[anti-] indigenous law" in the Senate, the EZLN's fundamental strategy is to pressure whichever bourgeois government is in office. The EZLN does not question capitalism—in which the misery of the cities and the countryside is rooted—but instead seeks to reform it through mass pressure. We communists raise the call for the defense of the EZLN and other leftist guerrillas against bourgeois state terror, but we also combat every illusion that they can act as an independent leadership for the social movement against the bourgeoisie.

One of the foundations of the agricultural economy of subsistence is the *ejido* [communal land]. In its crusade to completely open the Mexican countryside to imperialist plunder, in 1991 the Salinas administration passed a reform to Article 27 of the Constitution which allows private landowners to buy, rent or transfer ownership of *ejido* property, supposedly to make the land more competitive. But most of the *ejido* lands are not fertile: they're rocky hillsides or semi-arid valleys like the "*Tierras Flacas*" [Lean Lands] described in Agustín Yáñez's famous novel. The loss of these *ejidos* deprives their owners of their thin base of subsistence and condemns them to a life of extreme poverty in the cities, because the money they might get in exchange for their *ejidos* is barely enough to maintain a family for one or two months.

We communists oppose the forced stripping of lands from poor peasants and we stand with them in their struggles against the landlords and the government, just like we did when the Fox government sought to expropriate the *ejidos* of San Salvador Atenco to build an airport. However, we understand that the preservation of the current conditions of *ejido* property is in no way a panacea. As we wrote in a leaflet last July:

> "We do not romanticize, as many petty-bourgeois intellectuals and pseudo-leftists do, the current conditions of poverty, isolation and backwardness of the Mexican countryside. We want to make the advances of science and technology —education, tractors, irrigation, communications, etc.—available for all the rural population and to elevate their level of comfort, productivity and culture. It is impossible to carry out this perspective within the framework of capitalism—a system based on the production of profit for the handful of bosses and the misery of the overwhelming majority."
>
> —"Mexico: Peasant Protests Against Land Seizure," *WV* No. 785, 9 August 2002

The social, economic and cultural development of Mexico can only be achieved through a *socialist revolution* which puts the proletariat in power, leading the peasant and indigenous masses and all the oppressed, and establishes a planned socialist economy. From its inception, a victorious workers state in a backward country—which also shares a border with the U.S.—would have to fight to promote proletarian revolution inside the American imperialist heast and on a world scale. A socialist revolution in Mexico would really have an electrifying effect on the workers in the U.S.

An important part of the U.S. proletariat is made up of workers of Mexican background, especially in California, Texas and some cities in the North and the East. The immigrant workers, many of whom have strong family ties in Mexico and other countries, have brought with them the experience of bitter class struggle in their countries. To unleash this potential for revolutionary struggle we need a *revolutionary internationalist party* capable of breaking the hold that the racist and pro-imperialist AFL-CIO bureaucracy has over the American working class. This perspective underlines the crucial nature of the struggle for full citizenship rights for all immigrants in the U.S.—an integral part of the daily work of our American comrades.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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Israel...

(continued from page 1)

bourgeoisie, Marxists must win it to consciously champion the defense of the Palestinian people.

In the lead-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, we warned that Israel might use the cover of war to "transfer" all Palestinians out of the Occupied Territories. Instead, the wall and the intolerable economic hardships and repression are choking the life out of Palestinian areas. As one of Sharon's cabinet ministers suggested last year, "Make their life so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly." The Zionists shoot to kill not only Palestinians who breach the wall's checkpoints, but now Israeli youth as well who are moved to protest this atrocity.

Oslo "Peace" Accord Paved Way to Ghetto

The wall—Sharon calls it "unilateral disengagement"—is the ultimate expression of the "unilateral separation" that the Zionist "peace camp," represented by the likes of Meretz spokesman Yossi Sarid, has long championed. It is also the fruit of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords that created the Palestinian Authority. At the time we wrote, in an article headlined "Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto," that this deal "does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" and instead "would place the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" (*WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993). An academic study by Harvard University research scholar Sara Roy, "Ending the Palestinian Economy" (*Middle East Policy*, 1 December 2002), described the formation of the Palestinian ghettos:

> "The fragmentation of Palestinian land into geographically noncontiguous areas or cantons, with exit and entry tightly monitored and controlled by Israel, was a reality directly imposed on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by the terms of the Oslo peace agreements. It is not well known that the division of the Palestinian territories was first carried out in the Gaza Strip in October 1993, just one month after the Declaration of Principles —the first Oslo document—was signed on the White House lawn....
>
> "By December 1999, the Gaza Strip had been divided into three cantons and the West Bank into 227, the majority of which were no larger than two square kilometers in size. While Palestinians maintained control over many of the cantons and were promised authority over more if not most, Israel maintained jurisdiction over the land areas in between the cantons, which in effect gave Israel control over all the land and its disposition.... The logical and intended consequence of territorial cantonization was separation and isolation, greatly facilitated by closure policy. In fact, although closure was imposed prior to the implementation of the Oslo agreements, these agreements institutionalized and formalized closure as a policy measure."

Following the 1967 war and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, the problem for the Zionists was how to ensure control over the land and resources of these areas while avoiding integration into the Zionist state of the millions of Palestinians living there. The consensus among the Zionist political parties was that the Palestinians should be given some minimal voice in their own affairs while final control of the land, resources and economy remained in the hands of Israel. The first of a series of plans to realize this objective was put together by General Yigal Allon, the deputy prime minister for the Labor Party. Allon proposed to establish a string of settlements in the Jordan Valley, in the Judean desert and around East Jerusalem as a preliminary step leading to formal annexation by Israel. Altogether, the plan envisaged establishing some sort of Palestinian entity in about 50 percent of the West Bank while Israel annexed East Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley, the Hebron Hills in the south of the West Bank and the southern part of the Gaza Strip.

When Likud came to power in 1977, the Allon Plan was supplemented by the Sharon Plan, which called for a new belt of settlements to be built along the western side of the West Bank. The massive settlement expansion envisaged by Sharon was carried out starting in 1992 by a new Labor government under Yitzhak Rabin, which offered settlers large economic incentives. From the signing of the Oslo "peace" accords in September 1993 to the end of 2000, the number of settlers in the West Bank increased by 90 percent. Rabin, expanding on an idea originally proposed by Allon and Sharon, introduced the network of "bypass roads" that reinforced the isolation of West Bank cities. The 1995 Oslo II agreement outlawed Palestinian construction within 55 yards of either side of these roads, rendering hundreds of Palestinian houses vulnerable to demolition. The map of the wall being constructed in the West Bank corresponds, almost to the square mile, to earlier maps drawn up by Allon and Sharon.

Today, the entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by "bypass roads" that are off-limits to Palestinians. The Zionists have implemented "collective guilt," imposing restrictions, razing buildings and launching military assaults against entire communities in retaliation for attacks against Israeli civilians or soldiers. Zionist settlers, who number over 400,000 (including East Jerusalem), freely rampage throughout the Occupied Territories, stealing land and murdering Palestinians by the dozens. A Zionist settler in Gaza told the *New York Times* (15 January): "In Jerusalem, when you see an Arab you don't know whether he's with you or against you, but here if you see an Arab you know he's dangerous and you shoot him." Defense of the Palestinians must begin with the demand for *the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories—the walls, the troops, the settlements and the apartheid highway network.*

Fissures Within the Zionist Fortress

The construction of the wall in the West Bank takes place as some in the Israeli establishment and Washington are starting to feel that the Sharon government's unbridled repression against the Palestinians and refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority may not be in the Zionist state's best interests. When some prominent Israeli and Palestinian politicians negotiated an unofficial "peace plan" in Geneva in December, an implicit condemnation of Israeli government policy, the gesture was hailed by U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan and even by U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, a Zionist hardliner. As Justice Minister Tommy Lapid, of the Shinui Party, Sharon's main coalition partner, put it last month: "We could become the South Africa of today, and there is the danger that we could be subject to international boycotts" (London *Independent*, 6 January).

There is also growing unease in the armed forces and security apparatus, including among elite Zionist troops and top officers. In late September, 27 Air Force reserve pilots signed a letter saying they refused to carry out air strikes against civilian areas. The following month, the Israeli army chief of staff criticized the restrictions on Palestinians. On November 14, four former heads of the sinister domestic security agency, Shin Bet, from both the Labor Party and Sharon's Likud, came out against the government's policy in the Occupied Territories, with several explicitly criticizing the wall. On December 28, 13 reservists of the elite General Staff Reconnaissance Unit sent a letter to Sharon seconding the pilots' refusal to serve in the Occupied Territories. Altogether, in the past three years, more than one thousand Israelis have refused to serve in the armed forces in the Occupied Territories. Last month, five of them were court-martialed, the first time this has happened in 20 years.

Jewish Historical Institute

Nazi wall around Jewish Warsaw Ghetto, established 1939.

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On February 2, Sharon announced a plan to remove nearly all Jewish settlements from the Gaza Strip because they are a "security burden" and a cause of "continuous friction." When Sharon proposed last week to dismantle four isolated settlements in the northern West Bank—representing less than one-half of 1 percent of the total number of settlers—in exchange for an agreement to keep all the others, the deal was vetoed by leaders of the fascistic settler movement.

Part of what is behind the Zionists' brutal imprisonment of the Palestinians in unlivable ghettos is what is referred to as the "demographics" problem, a euphemism meaning that the birth rate of Palestinians, including Israeli Arabs, far outstrips that of Israeli Jews. In explaining what might be behind Sharon's proposal for the Gaza settlements, the *New York Times* (3 February) wrote, "Some members of Likud argue that Israel must draw borders in a way to part with as many Arabs—but as little land—as possible." Seeking to exploit the "demographic" problem as a way to pressure the Zionists, Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qurei warned last month that "Israel's continued policy of building the wall means that talk about a Palestinian state makes no sense" and threatened that "if this Israeli policy continues, we are going to come back to the option of a single, bi-national democratic state" (Agence France-Presse, 9 January). Thomas Friedman, a staunch supporter of Israel, explained in the *New York Times* (14 September 2003) what that meant:

> "Rather than create the outlines of a two-state solution, this wall will kill that idea for Palestinians, and drive them, over time, to demand instead a one-state solution—where they and the Jews would have equal rights in one state. And since by 2010 there will be more Palestinian Arabs than Jews living in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza combined, this transformation of the Palestinian cause will be very problematic for Israel. If American Jews think it's hard to defend Israel today on college campuses, imagine what it will be like when their kids have to argue against the principle of one man, one vote."

Under capitalism, Israel will never be transformed into a binational democracy in which Jews and Arabs live together on

Kay Fernandes

Tom Hurndall, British member of International Solidarity Movement shot by Israeli forces in Gaza in April 2003, died of his injuries last month.

the basis of political equality, and both Friedman and Qurei know it. The Zionist state is a racist, exclusivist state, predicated on the expulsion, "transfer" or "displacement" of the Palestinian people. As we have warned in the past, the Zionist rulers are entirely capable of carrying out massacres of the Palestinians on a truly genocidal scale. It is vitally necessary for the working class, in the U.S. and internationally, to take up the call: *Defend the Palestinian people!*

Capitalist Divestment Is No Solution

The question of how to defend the Palestinians was debated at a January 24 workshop on "The Apartheid Wall and Its Effects on Palestinian Society" at the National Conference on Organized Resistance in Washington, D.C. The workshop was led by members of SUSTAIN, an organization whose full name expresses the campaign which is its primary activity: Stop U.S. Tax-Funded Aid to Israel Now. SUSTAIN also sponsors a campaign to get universities to divest their holdings in the Caterpillar Corporation in order to force it to stop selling Israel the bulldozers which are used to demolish Palestinian homes.

AFP

Israeli army blows up buildings in Rafah refugee camp in southern Gaza, November 2002.

A Spartacist speaker at the workshop noted that just as the bourgeoisies of Europe and America closed their borders to the Jews in the 1930s, today they close their eyes to the plight of the Palestinians. This was particularly evident when shamefully even many leftists in the Iraq antiwar movement often dropped any mention of the Palestinians to tailor their protests to appeal to the Democrats. In contrast, Spartacist contingents in those marches consciously made prominent our demands: "Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!"

Our speaker noted that we are opposed to the U.S. government funding the army of the Zionist state, but our starting point is seeking to mobilize workers against their "own" capitalist rulers. She recalled the 1991-92 Caterpillar strike, a critical class battle that was sold out by the UAW union bureaucracy in favor of a "consumer boycott" not very different from the "corporate campaign" today proposed by SUSTAIN. Divestment schemes and calls for capitalist boycotts foster illusions that union-busting corporations like Caterpillar, or even the blood-drenched U.S. imperialist government, could somehow become the agents for social justice through campaigns of moral suasion. In contrast, we fight to mobilize the labor movement in defense of the Palestinian people and against its class enemy at home, the rapacious U.S. ruling class.

In individual discussions after the workshop, SUSTAIN members insisted that it was necessary to drop defense of the Palestinians in the antiwar movement because "nothing should detract from the main struggle to defeat George Bush." But the Democrats have historically been, if anything, closer allies of the Zionists than the Republicans. It was President John Kennedy who initiated the close alliance with Israel, breaking the long-standing U.S. embargo on supplying major weapons to Tel Aviv while turning a blind eye to Israel's development of nuclear weapons. Following Israel's victory in the 1967 war and conquest of the Occupied Territories, Democratic president Lyndon Johnson showered Israel with political, economic and military support, making the U.S. Israel's major supplier of sophisticated weaponry (see Amos Elon, "A Very Special Relationship," *New York Review of Books*, 15 January).

The main problem with strategies such as those put forward by SUSTAIN, which seek to pressure the U.S. bourgeoisie to pressure Israel, is that they are premised on the idea that U.S. imperialism, the main force for reaction in the world today, is in some way superior to the Zionists. Ironically, the organizations pushing for the U.S. to pressure Israel inadvertently mimic the outlook of the Zionist "neocons" who promote U.S. intervention around the globe in the interest of "democracy." Tell that to the Iraqi people suffering under the boot of U.S. military occupation!

Proletarian Revolution Is the Only Solution

Sharon claims that the wall in the West Bank serves to stop "Palestinian terrorism." The Sharon regime is using Palestinian suicide attacks, which have killed hundreds of innocent Israeli civilians, as a pretext for even bloodier attacks on the Palestinians by the Zionist war machine. The suicide bombings against Israeli civilians, which are entirely criminal from the viewpoint of the international proletariat, serve to further drive the Hebrew-speaking population into the arms of the Zionist rulers.

Last fall, in an article in the *New York Review of Books* (23 October 2003), New York University professor Tony Judt described the situation as he saw it:

> "The two-state solution—the core of the Oslo process and the present 'road map'—is probably already doomed.... The true alternative facing the Middle East in coming years will be between an ethnically cleansed Greater Israel and a single, integrated, binational state of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians. That is indeed how the hard-liners in Sharon's cabinet see the choice; and that is why they anticipate the removal of the Arabs as the ineluctable condition for the survival of a Jewish state."

When Judt suggested that the "desirable outcome" might be a binational Israeli state, he provoked an uproar, as prominent Zionist intellectuals accused him of hating Jews, "pandering to genocide" and being "party to preparations for a final solution."

This clash between intellectuals in the realm of ideas reflects the material fact that there is no solution to the oppression of the Palestinian masses within the framework of capitalism, which is based on the nation-state and national aggrandizement. The Palestinians and the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel represent a case of *interpenetrated peoples*, two populations with competing claims to the same territory. Under capitalism, such conflicts can only be resolved through the suppression of one people by another through forced assimilation, forced population transfers ("ethnic cleansing") or outright genocide.

The only road to national and social liberation in the Near East is the mobilization of the proletariat on the basis of revolutionary internationalism to sweep away all the oppressive capitalist regimes in the region in the fight for a socialist federation of the Near East. To break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionist chauvinism will likely require an enormous shake-up in the region, such as the victory of socialist revolution in one of the other Near Eastern states. However, if the Zionist madmen are not to ultimately unleash their nuclear arsenal and engulf the whole of the region in a holocaust, the Hebrew proletariat must join with Arab workers in sweeping away the entire rotting edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East. Only then can the right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew and Palestinian people be assured. What is required above all is the construction of internationalist workers parties, sections of a reforged Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all variants of religious fundamentalism. *Defend the Palestinian people! For a socialist federation of the Near East!* ■

Spartacist Black History Month Forums

On the Civil Rights Movement —A Marxist Analysis—

Tuesday, February 17, 7 p.m.
University of Chicago
Ida Noyes Library
1212 E. 59th St. (at Woodlawn)
For more information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Saturday, February 21, 1 p.m.
322 W. 48th St., 1st floor
(between 8th and 9th Avenues)
For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

NEW YORK CITY

South Africa: Workers Struggle Against ANC Neo-Apartheid Rule

Saturday, February 28, 2 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Avenue
(5 blocks south of Rockridge BART)
For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

OAKLAND

Spartacist/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Down With the U.S. Occupation of Iraq! All U.S. Troops Out Now!

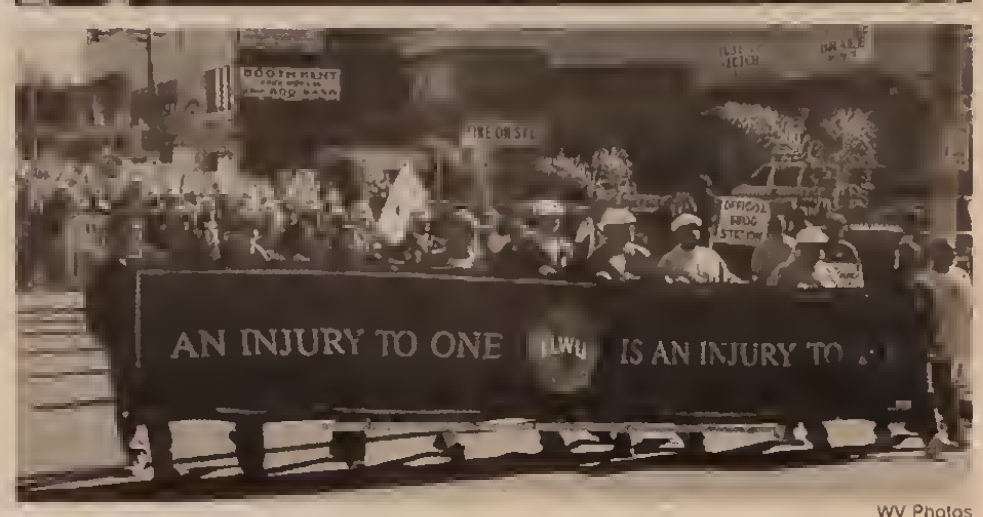
Saturday, February 21, 2 p.m.
First Parish Church, 3 Church Street
Harvard Square, Cambridge
For more information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

WORKERS VANGUARD

Extend the Strike Nationwide!

UFCW Strike: A Battle for All Labor



WV Photos

Top: Massive January 31 rally in Inglewood in support of UFCW strike was joined by contingents from over 20 unions, including powerful longshore union (bottom).

20,000 Rally in Support of Grocery Workers

LOS ANGELES, February 3—The over 70,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) in Southern California who have been on strike or locked out for four months received a giant boost when some 20,000 workers turned out for a strike support march and rally in Inglewood on January 31. Called by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the rally was titled "Holding the Line for America's Health Care" and included contingents from over 20 unions, some of which had several locals participating. The demonstration came in the wake of the January 20 announcement by the AFL-CIO that "the labor movement will extend nationwide its efforts" in solidarity with the UFCW strike, including an international effort to raise desperately needed funds for the striking workers. This could also break the near-total blackout of the strike in the bourgeois media outside California.

The many unions that participated in the rally included mainly Latino laborers from LIUNA; HERE Local 11 hotel and restaurant workers, whose contract with 16 hotels expires in April; SEIU Local 1877 "Justice for Janitors"; SEIU Local 399 home health care workers; county workers from SEIU Local 660; L.A. county firefighters; the California Nurses Association; NALC postal workers; IBEW electrical workers and UNITE garment workers. A contingent of over 100 International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 13 members—including several longshoremen from Portland, Oregon—marched in the rally behind a drill team and a banner declaring, "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!"

What is most importantly posed for the UFCW to succeed in its struggle against the supermarket bosses is the national extension of the strike. UFCW Local 655, representing more than 10,000 workers in St. Louis, Missouri, struck 97 stores and won a contract guaranteeing that the companies will continue to pay full health care premiums for members and their families. But the general strategy of the UFCW bureaucrats has been to limit the strike to the Southern California area. UFCW workers who struck in West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky were sent back to work. Some 15,000 UFCW workers in Arizona and 9,000 in Indiana are working under an indefinite contract extension. Meanwhile, contract negotiations just began in Seattle and Chicago. What should happen is a solid strike by all UFCW workers against every Vons/Safeway, Albertsons and Ralphs/Krogers in California and across the country.

The national extension of the strike must be accompanied by the crucial task of shutting down the *distribution centers*—nobody shops at empty stores. It was a real betrayal by the UFCW bureaucracy that they ordered that picket lines be taken down at Ralphs, which locked out its workers. And it was an even greater betrayal when on December 19

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NYPD Guns Down Black Teenager

We Will Not Forget Timothy Stansbury Jr.

Family photo

Statement by the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense

"They're killing us like dogs out here, pure dogs!" stated Phyllis Clayburne while talking about the horrific death of her 19-year-old son, Timothy Stansbury Jr. Posing no threat whatsoever and unarmed, Stansbury was brutally shot by a trigger-happy NYPD housing cop. It happened on the frigid morning of Saturday, January 24 in the Louis Armstrong housing project, located in the black Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant. Stansbury and two friends were headed back to a party, taking a shortcut tenants sometimes used across the roof of the apartment complex where they lived. At the doorway to the roof Stansbury was met by two housing cops on a routine patrol with their guns already drawn. Stansbury was shot on sight—at close range and without warning—as cop Richard Neri fired his 9mm Glock. Stansbury made his way down the stairway, bleeding, and collapsed in the building's lobby.

Unlike the previous "in your face" Giuliani administration, Mayor Bloomberg and top cop commissioner Raymond Kelly have taken a different tack. Kelly's statement that "the shooting appears to be unjustified" provoked an uproar from kill-crazy cops. In a rare move, the Brooklyn district attorney has already convened a grand jury. They're scrambling to keep the lid on while preparing for the upcoming Republican Party convention and ratcheting up police terror. What they are trying to prevent is the kind of social unrest we saw after the killing of Amadou Diallo, when thousands protested in the streets. That Bloomberg's obscene presence at Stansbury's funeral is taken as something more than an empty gesture is due to the profound vacuum of leadership among the oppressed as sellout black and Latino Democrat capitalist politicians preach love and reconciliation with our most bitter and murderous enemies.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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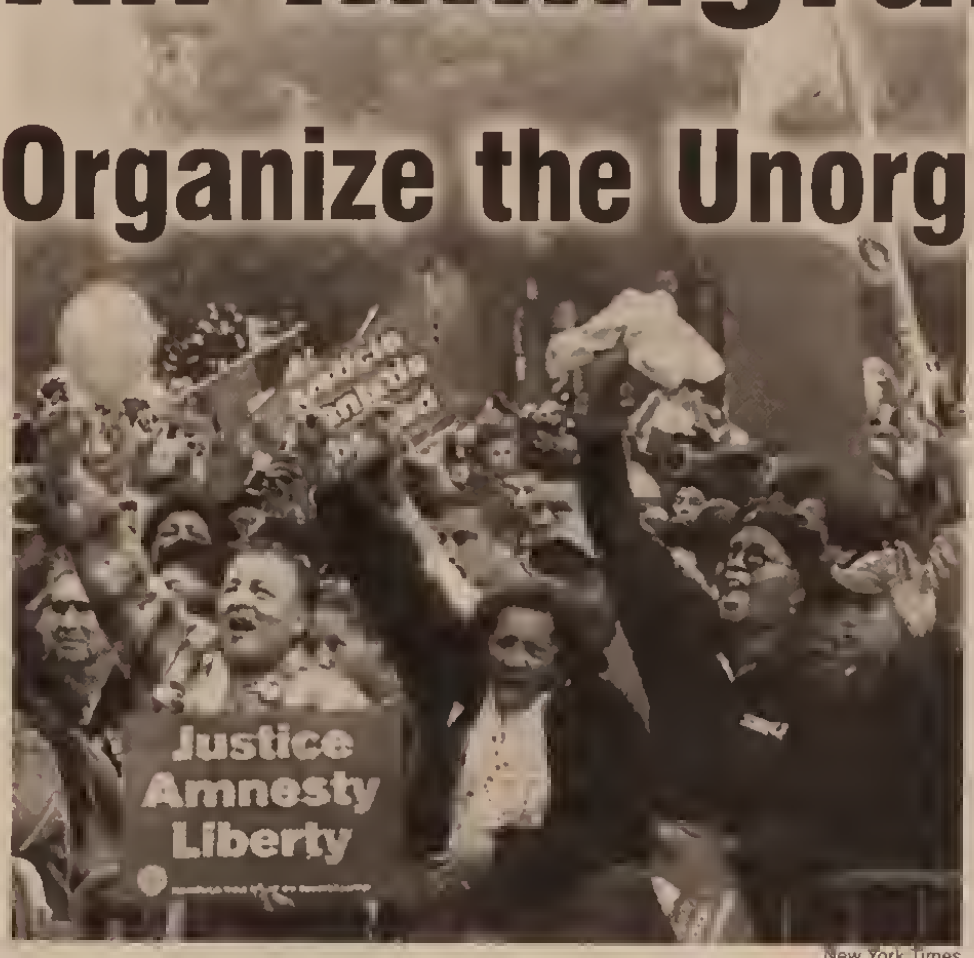
No. 820 20 February 2004

Bush's Immigration Trap

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Labor: Organize the Unorganized!



New York Times

Over 100,000 rally in New York City as part of AFL-CIO-organized Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride on 4 October 2003.

George Bush has begun his run for re-election in earnest. Much of what he offers is a continuation of ongoing themes. The Iraq war was great, we are told, although just maybe the "Weapons of Mass Destruction" were nonexistent, with the intelligence "community" currently being set up as potential fall guys for bad information. Similarly, we are told that the current occupation is going swimmingly, and Iraq is on the verge of becoming a "great democracy," notwithstanding the continuing flow of body bags back to the States, the countless dead Iraqis and the murderous enmities—manipulated and inflamed by the U.S. occupiers—between the Sunni, Shi'ite and Kurdish populations of Iraq. As for the U.S. economy, Bush declares that it's really spectacular, with the jobs to come when the rich are assured that their tax cuts will be permanent. To the reactionary Christian fundamentalists, Bush has offered a campaign against homosexual marriage.

To this reactionary and fetid potpourri Bush has added a proposal to change the laws with regard to the estimated 8 to 14 million undocumented immigrants, mainly from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, who currently reside here. They eke out a wretched underground existence—picking fruits and vegetables on farms, cleaning bed pans in nursing homes, laundering sheets and towels in hotels, washing dishes in restaurants—and all the while living in constant fear of deportation.

Bush's proposal would in no way improve their conditions or give them greater security. If anything, the opposite would be the case. Bush made it perfectly clear that he intends to more effectively organize and enforce the exploitation of immigrant workers, not to extend them democratic rights. Undocumented immigrants who register as "guest workers" would be given no special right to permanent residency, eventually leading to citizenship. "America's a welcoming country," Bush pontificated, "but citizenship must not be the automatic reward for violating the laws" (*New York Times*, 8 January).

The bill would give an employer near-total control over those undocumented workers who register for legal status. Such workers would have little defense against slave-labor working conditions imposed by their "co-sponsor" employers. Any attempt to change employers could result in deportation. Moreover, by binding the worker to an employer, the Feds will be able to keep tabs on immigrants who today might evade their scrutiny. As one undocumented worker put it: "The job I hold is one that no Americans, black or white, want to do. But this program makes us all scared. It seems to put the power in the hands of the employer, not the employee. You might be better off taking your chances as an undocumented worker" (*Newsday*, 8 January).

AP

Arizona cops round up immigrants, part of escalating crackdown in U.S./Mexico border region.

The liberal academic economist Robert Kuttner pointed out:

> "Employers already enjoy great leverage over low-wage workers—witness how Wal-Mart has no trouble attracting workers despite dismal pay—but this plan would make immigrant workers something close to indentured servants. Unlike workers with green cards, they would lose their guest-worker status if they lost their jobs. And Bush's plan denies these guest workers the ability to apply for permanent resident status, much less citizenship."
>
> —*BusinessWeek*, 9 February

No doubt Bush and his advisers figured that any proposed "reform" of immigration laws would lead to further inroads into the Latino vote come next November. But Mexican Americans and other Latinos, many of whom have relatives among undocumented immigrants, easily see through the repressive and reactionary nature of Bush's measure. While Bush's proposal has been welcomed by many capitalists, especially in California agribusiness, every major Mexican American organization has voiced opposition to it. "They're asking people to sign up for a program that is more likely to ensure their departure than ensure their permanent residency," was the immediate response of Cecilia Muñoz, a vice president of the National Council of La Raza (*New York Times*, 7 January).

Meanwhile, Bush's immigration plan has been welcomed by Mexican president Vicente Fox. Upon taking office, Bush promised Fox some substantial immigration reform. This was shelved by the September 11 attacks and the subsequent "war on terror." The current Bush plan, however—Fox's enthusiasm notwithstanding—has been received with widespread disgust and anger in Mexico.

Over the past few decades, large-scale immigration—undocumented as well as legally sanctioned—has been used by the capitalists to increase the rate of exploitation of labor in the U.S. Currently, over 25 percent of those hired into new jobs are foreign-born, who now make up over 12 percent of the total workforce. But when the economic and/or political needs and interests of the American ruling class change in this regard, the spigot of immigration can be slowed to a trickle and substantially reversed.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the federal, state and local

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Partisan Defense Committee

Hands Off Anti-Fascist Protester Ines Weiner!

The following letter was sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to Martha Coakley, District Attorney for Middlesex County, Massachusetts, on February 17.

The Partisan Defense Committee protests the legal railroading of Ines Weiner for her actions in protesting fascist, white-supremacist World Church of the Creator thugs on 14 September 2002. Weiner, a black immigrant, was uniquely targeted out of the hundreds of protesters against the fascists that day.

This particular fascist outfit, the World Church of the Creator, openly declares its aim of driving Jews and non-whites "off the planet." It is responsible for murderous assaults such as the killing spree of its member, Benjamin Smith. In a Fourth of July rampage in 1999, Smith shot down blacks, Jews and Asians. He killed Ricky Byrdsong, the former coach of the Northwestern basketball team, and a Korean American student and wounded three others. Other thugs linked to this same group were charged with the murder of a gay couple in Northern California.

It is grotesque that Ines Weiner, an anti-racist activist, is now charged, in addition to trumped-up counts of assault and battery and disorderly conduct, with violation of the fascists' "civil rights." Rather, it is the prosecution of this courageous opponent of fascist terror that constitutes a violation of First Amendment rights. Ines Weiner's participation in a protest against the World Church of the Creator was not a crime but an act of basic defense of working people and minorities. We demand all charges against her be dropped.

TROTSKY

LENIN

Proletarian Unity and Defense of Immigrant Workers

Intransigently opposed to national chauvinism, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party he built championed the rights of immigrant workers, a tradition we continue to fight for today. This is in stark contrast to the protectionist chauvinism of the pro-imperialist labor bureaucracy, which serves to further the capitalists' aim of dividing the working class along national and ethnic lines. In the midst of renewed attacks against foreign-born workers in the U.S., we call on the labor movement to organize the unorganized and demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

The rapidly developing industrial countries, introducing machinery on a large scale and ousting the backward countries from the world market, raise wages at home above the average rate and thus attract workers from the backward countries.

Hundreds of thousands of workers thus wander hundreds and thousands of versts. Advanced capitalism drags them forcibly into its orbit, tears them out of the backwoods in which they live, makes them participants in the world-historical movement and brings them face to face with the powerful, united, international class of factory owners.

There can be no doubt that dire poverty alone compels people to abandon their native land, and that the capitalists exploit the immigrant workers in the most shameless manner. But only reactionaries can shut their eyes to the *progressive* significance of this modern migration of nations. Emancipation from the yoke of capital is impossible without the further development of capitalism, and without the class struggle that is based on it. And it is into this struggle that capitalism is drawing the masses of the working people of the *whole* world, breaking down the musty, fusty habits of local life, breaking down national barriers and prejudices, uniting workers from all countries in huge factories and mines in America, Germany, and so forth....

The bourgeoisie incites the workers of one nation against those of another in the endeavour to keep them disunited. Class-conscious workers, realising that the breakdown of all the national barriers by capitalism is inevitable and progressive, are trying to help to enlighten and organise their fellow-workers from the backward countries.

—V.I. Lenin, "Capitalism and Workers' Immigration," 29 October 1913

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

The closing date for news in this issue is 17 February.

No. 820 **20 February 2004**

SYC Leads Protest at CCSF:

Military Recruiters Off Campus!

Young Spartacus

SAN FRANCISCO—Chanting "*Military recruiters off campus now! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq!*", "*War abroad, racism at home—military recruiters go home!*" and "*Military recruiters we say no, capitalism has got to go!*", the SYC led an impromptu protest on January 29 against recruiters for the U.S. Army, who were setting up a table on the City College of San Francisco (CCSF) campus. Ten members of the campus Anarchist Library group joined us in protest, bringing with them plastic drums and a megaphone that they lent us. Their participation helped make it a lively, spirited protest. Another 20 students, mostly black, gathered around, some chanting with us. This protest was an opportunity for students to take a stand against U.S. imperialism. It is the job of campus recruiters to lure youth into becoming fodder for the imperialists in their wars against neocolonial countries like Iraq. *ROTC and military recruiters off campus!*

We proposed the protest to the anarchists at the start of our weekly campus sale after a pair of U.S. Army recruiters appeared. Some of the anarchists argued that there was no point in protesting the recruiters since they had permits from the administration. The week before, one of the anarchists had gone to the dean of student activities with a complaint that the recruiters hadn't filed paperwork to get a table. These anarchists, who claim to be opponents of "authority," actually defended calling on the administration to enforce its rules, which it would all too gladly use against the left. During the protest, some anarchists remained on the sidelines, while others *politely chatted with the military recruiters!*

Last year, liberal pacifists and most anarchists opposed the war but refused to defend Iraq against the biggest imperialist power in the world. Revolutionaries stood for the military defense of Iraq, while giving no support to Saddam Hussein's brutal nationalist regime. *Down with U.S. imperialism!*

As we said at the united-front demonstration we initiated against the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at UC Berkeley last spring: "The best way to defend the victims of imperialist war abroad as well as blacks, immigrants and working people from the war on them at home is through class struggle against America's capitalist rulers" (*WV* No. 802, 25 April 2003). We welcome more united-front protests to get the recruiters off the CCSF campus and campuses across the nation. Join us in this fight! ■

Spartacist/Spartacus Youth Club Forums

Down With the U.S. Occupation of Iraq! All U.S. Troops Out Now!

Saturday, February 21, 2 p.m.
First Parish Church, 3 Church Street
Harvard Square, Cambridge

For more information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

Victory to Grocery Workers Strike! Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!

Friday, February 20, 6 p.m.
Caffe Pergolesi
418 Cedar St. at Elm St.

For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

SANTA CRUZ

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

CHICAGO

Alternate Thursdays, 7 p.m.

February 26: **The ICL's Fight Against Counterrevolution in East Germany and the Soviet Union**

University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, 5811 S. Ellis Ave., Room 204
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

TORONTO

Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

February 26: **The Spanish Revolution: The Betrayals of Stalinism and Anarchism and the Trotskyist Alternative**

York University Student Centre
Room 311C
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

Visit the International Communist League Web site:
www.icl-fi.org

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

February 28: **Black Liberation through Socialist Revolution**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 8 p.m.

February 24: **Capitalism and "Globalization": Smash Imperialism! For Global Workers Rule!**

Columbia University
Fayerweather Hall, Room 302
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

VANCOUVER

Thursday, 6 p.m.

February 19: **The Russian Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power**

Simon Fraser University
Maggie Benston Centre, Room 2290
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: tllt@look.ca

Strange Postings on Iran

Mullahs, Monarchists, Neocons and Zionists

Imagine our surprise when we read under the headline "Tehran Terror-fest" in Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* (26 January) that "Spartacists" would be among the participants in the "Ten Days of Dawn" celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Ayatollah Khomeini's return to Iran. The *Post* article was penned by one Amir Taheri, an Iranian monarchist and former executive editor in chief of Iran's largest daily, *Kayhan*, during the last decade of the despised Shah's murderous rule. As Marxist opponents of Islamic reaction, we energetically fought for the independent interests of the proletariat during the 1978-79 upheaval against the Shah, participating in struggles internationally with our signature slogans on signs, banners and newspapers (including in Farsi) proclaiming: "Down With the Shah! Don't Bow to Khomeini! No to the Veil! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" It would be very odd indeed for any "Spartacists" connected to the Spartacist League or the International Communist League (formerly international Spartacist tendency) to be guests at the Iranian clerical regime's fete.

On February 10, the *Post* ran another article by Amir Taheri which expanded upon his false amalgam of Marxists with Islamists. Headlined "Tehran Tyranny's 25th," the article cites as "terrorists" in league with Khomeini in 1979 in Iran: the "People's Mujahedin," the "People's Fedayeen Guerrillas, one pro-Moscow, the other pro-Beijing," and adds, "There were, as well, the Trotskyites, the Spartacists, the Guevarists and countless other leftist terrorist gangs." Taheri then notes, "Once in power he [Khomeini] began destroying his former allies one by one." Taheri's articles are the newsprint equivalent of three-card monty: shuffling names and time sequences faster than the eye can follow. In the first article (26 January), he claims "Spartacists, Trotskyites and Guevarists" are in Tehran today celebrating Khomeini's rise to power. In the next article (10 February), he says these very forces were wiped out by the ayatollahs two decades ago. To paraphrase Trotsky, even slander should make some sense.

We don't know exactly why these smears were run (and widely picked up by other print media and Web sites), but Taheri, the *Post* and the archreactionary think tanks and foundations that back him have plenty of reasons to hate us for our ideas. We are energetic defenders of the Palestinian people against the genocidal policies of the Zionists; we proudly took a side in defense of Iraq against the one-sided slaughter waged by U.S. imperialism; we unconditionally defend the North Korean deformed workers state's right to possess nuclear weapons to defend itself; we are champions of the rights of black people, immigrants and workers against the capitalist rulers. What stands behind Taheri and his slander machine are the architects of U.S. imperialist mass murder, braintrusters for Zionist terror against the Palestinian people and racist, anti-labor media magnates like Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black.

Taheri's association of "Spartacists" with the Iranian ayatollahs is so demonstrably false that he is convicted by his own pen as a liar whose word on anything is not to be believed. In addition to our publicly documented 25-year history of opposition to Islamic fundamentalism in Iran, we rallied to the defense of our political opponents on the left who were tortured, jailed and killed by the mullahs they foolishly tailed against the Shah back in 1979. In 1989, we launched an international united-front campaign of protest against the massive wave of killings of leftist political prisoners and other dissidents in Khomeini's prisons.

We are proud to be the only political tendency on the planet which *hailed* the 1979 Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan in the war against CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats. We condemned Gorbachev's withdrawal of the troops, which signaled the rollback culminating in the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself. We raised over $40,000 in a 1989 worldwide campaign of humanitarian aid for the civilian victims of the CIA's *mujahedin* reactionaries in the Afghan city of Jalalabad.

Taheri is not merely a tool of the ousted monarchists, the displaced plumes of the peacock throne, which the neocons in and around the Bush administration seek to reinstall by crowning the son of the last hated monarch Iran's next ruler. No, Amir Taheri is himself a veritable Weapon of Mass Regurgitation (WMR). Numerous articles under his name have appeared in slightly varied form in newspapers around the world, including the *Jerusalem Post*, the Canadian *National Post*, the *National Review*, the *New York Times*, major bourgeois weeklies and dailies in France, Germany, Spain, Italy, as well as *Arab News*, mouthpiece for the reactionary Saudi regime, and *Gulf News*, published out of the United Arab Emirates. The virulently racist right-wing McCarthyite David Horowitz propagates Taheri's columns on college campuses. Zionist Web sites pick up Taheri's columns as part of their worldwide crusade to bash opponents of Israeli state terror as "anti-Semites."

Bad things tend to happen to people who are called "terrorist," especially in Bush's America where many fundamental democratic rights have been abrogated by the so-called "war on terror." In pursuit of our own democratic rights, we have defended the rights of the entire left and workers movement by energetically fighting such deadly slanders. We've fought violence-baiting and "terrorist" smears from publications, including the *New York Post* before, as well as more formidable forces than that Murdoch rag. The Spartacist League sued the FBI over its false targeting of us as "terrorist"—and won. In 1984, the FBI was forced to recast its definition of the SL to exactly what we are: a Marxist political organization. This was a modest but important victory against the new McCarthyism of the Reagan years. We also noted at the time that we have "no illusions that the government's secret police have stopped or will stop their harassment, infiltration and disruption of Marxist political organizations and other perceived political opponents of the government" ("FBI Admits: Marxists Are Not Terrorists," *WV* No. 368, 7 December 1984). Consistent with our purpose to defend the workers movement from capitalist repression, it is necessary to expose Amir Taheri and the dangerous forces behind him.

Not Merely a Pundit but a Provocateur

Amir Taheri is not only a prolific writer; he is also a scribe for the cabal of neocons represented by a "public relations" firm called Benador Associates, whose client list is a veritable "who's who" of the architects and apologists for the terror and destruction for which U.S. imperialism is infamous worldwide. The neocons' mission is to get the Bush administration to bring "democracy" to Iran and redraw the map of the Near East in the interests of U.S. imperialism and "Israeli security." Notably, a Pacific News Service report (19 June 2003) states that Taheri is now a paid employee of the U.S. government, a director of a new satellite television channel which broadcasts Farsi-language U.S. propaganda into Iran.

Like the late Shah, for whom he apologizes with mild criticisms, Taheri views Marxists as criminals. "Fanatical Journalism," an 18 July 2003 article on the Payvand Web site, which specializes in news about Iran, states:

> "At the height of his power, the late Shah of Iran dismissed the assertion that his regime held any political prisoners, retorting that the people whom the interviewer were referring to 'happened to be Marxist,' an outlawed political ideology. He was basically trying to say that being a Marxist was tantamount to being a criminal. This mentality permeated the psyche of his loyal subjects as well, including Mr. Taheri.... It is unfortunate that a 'journalist' should find it necessary to falsify and vilify in order to score political points. We know from experience that ideologues of this kind, when in power, would no longer need the service of words."

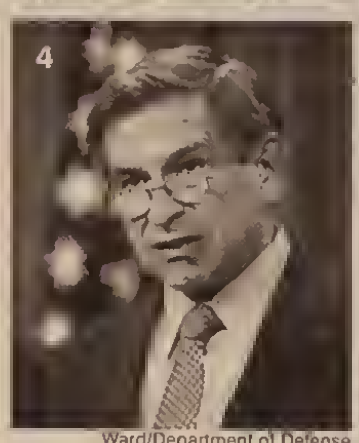
When in power, the Shah "spoke" through the torture and execution of thousands of political prisoners. Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi was installed by the CIA in 1953 in a coup against the bourgeois-nationalist Mossadeq government which planned to nationalize Iran's oil industry. To prop up the Shah's rule, U.S. and Israeli intelligence officers helped found the "intelligence" agency SAVAK to round up members of the outlawed Communist party (Tudeh) and "neutralize" all opponents of the regime. All facets of life were monitored, censored and repressed, from journalists' articles, to classroom discussions, labor and peasant organizations and even Iranians living abroad. SAVAK ran a network of informers which monitored some 30,000 Iranian students on U.S. college campuses alone (Intelligence Resource Program Web site, 13 January 2000). In the late 1970s, Iranian students protested the U.S.-backed Shah in massive demonstrations, wearing masks to

continued on page 10

Benador Associates

Benador Associates

Bob Guzzardi



Ward/Department of Defense

Stikkel/Department of Defense

Columbia Pictures

Neocon rogues' gallery: (1) Amir Taheri with Eleana Benador; (2) Richard Perle with Eleana Benador; (3) Reza Pahlavi (son of deposed Iranian monarch) with Eleana Benador; (4) Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz; (5) Vice president Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. We have not yet confirmed what relationship Dr. Strangelove (6) has with neocons and Benador.

Racist Campaign Escalates Against Aborigines

For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

Australia

On the night of February 15 the Aboriginal ghetto known as "the Block" in Redfern, Sydney exploded in anger over the death of 17-year-old Thomas "TJ" Hickey. Thomas Hickey died in the early morning hours of that day from injuries sustained after being impaled on a metal fence, having fallen from his bicycle while fleeing cops who were scouring Redfern on Saturday after a bag was snatched at the local train station. Thomas Hickey had plenty of reason to flee—he'd been beaten by the police only a few weeks after arriving in Redfern last December, in what the cops claimed was a "mistaken identity" arrest.

Thomas Hickey's family and friends in the Aboriginal community of Redfern had barely begun to grieve his death when the notoriously racist Sydney cops piled on their provocations: at midday patrolling officers taunted Aboriginal youth with racist epithets, by 1 p.m. they had shut down the Redfern station entrance nearest the Block, and by 5 p.m. they sealed off traffic on the street leading to the Block. A resident described the scene: "There were hundreds of them, arms locked, visors down. I've never seen so many police. Finally the kids started yelling, 'C'mon, bring it on'."

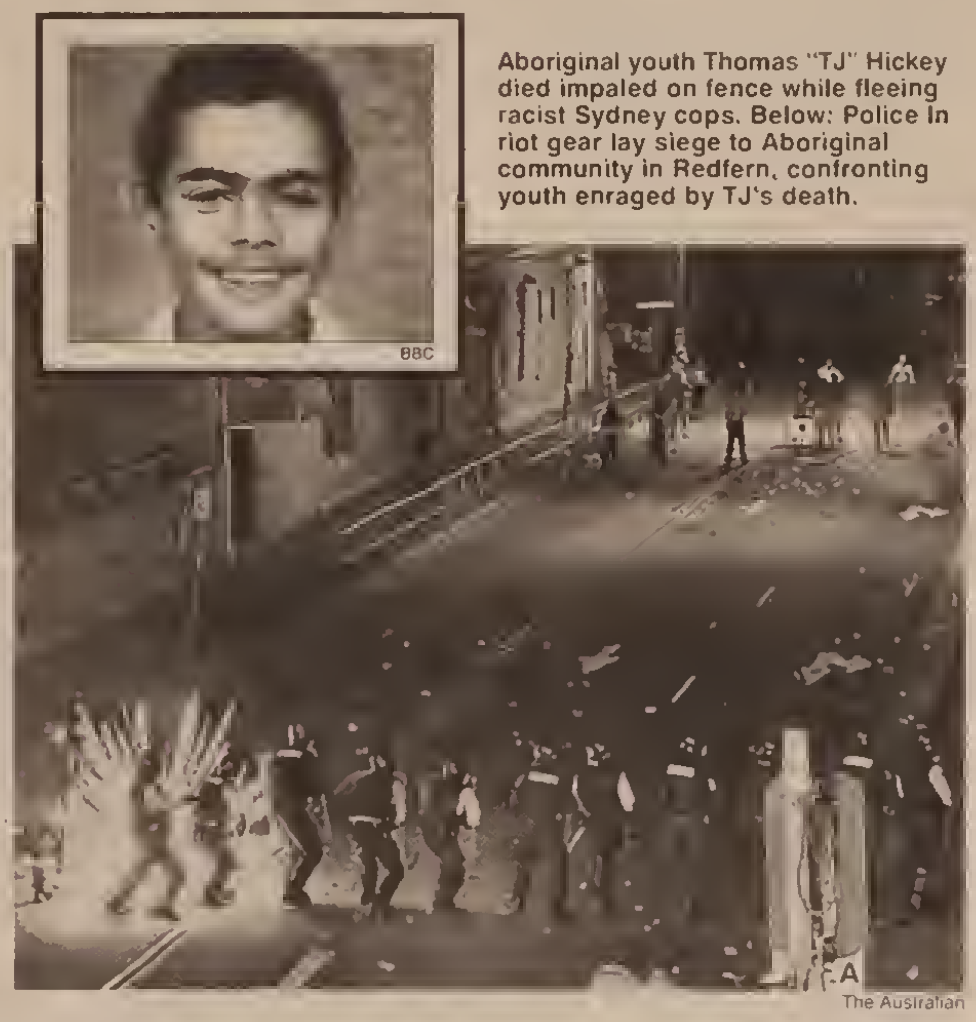
Throughout the night up to a hundred Aboriginal youths, many of them friends of Thomas Hickey, battled phalanxes of riot cops, 40 of whom were injured. Fed up with years of racist terror from the Carr state Labor government's cops, Aboriginal residents mobilized to defend themselves. The following day lampposts in Redfern displayed wanted posters featuring photos of police under the heading "Child Murderers" and a young woman spray-painted "Redfern cops are child-killers" on the road.

Five people have already been arrested and the police are threatening to arrest more. We say: Drop the charges! Free all those arrested! In solidarity with the besieged Aboriginal people, supporters of the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League, went to Redfern on Monday evening. They distributed their newspaper, *Australasian Spartacist* No. 185 (Summer 2003/04), featuring the article we print below, slightly edited.

Australasian **SPARTACIST**

In this racist hellhole, where desperate refugees are incarcerated for years in concentration camps if they are not pushed back out to sea in leaky boats, the brutal capitalist oppression of the Aboriginal population continues to intensify. Aboriginal people are systematically denied decent health, education, housing and employment and are imprisoned at a rate 15 times the national average. Today the life expectancy for Aborigines is some 20 years less than other Australians.

It is truly sick then that the White Australia capitalist exploiters are now on a heightened ideological offensive to brand blacks as deserving of their own oppression. For this purpose the bourgeoisie and the right-wing Howard government [Liberal Party/National Party Coalition] are seizing on the existence of domestic violence and other problems within communities like alcoholism—problems that exist throughout society but which are exacerbated by racist oppression and enforced marginalisation. West Australian Labor premier, Geoff Gallop, told Aboriginal parents and elders to stop making excuses for Aboriginal juvenile crime, railing that historical considerations should not be blamed for current problems (*Sunday Times*, 21 November 2003). Meanwhile a spate of additional anti-drinking bans has been foisted on Aboriginal communities. These new laws have been met with just opposition from angry residents, for example in the far northern Cape York town of Aurukun. The laws are patronising, racist constrictions of democratic rights. And like the broader anti-Aboriginal ideological campaign, they provide convenient pretexts for even greater police harassment.



Aboriginal youth Thomas "TJ" Hickey died impaled on fence while fleeing racist Sydney cops. Below: Police in riot gear lay siege to Aboriginal community in Redfern, confronting youth enraged by TJ's death.

Indigenous youth in country towns face night curfews by local councils and mandatory detention by state governments. Fuelled by legal violence, extra-legal terror is also on the rise. In the north Queensland town of Mossman, Ku Klux Klan gangs have attacked Aborigines in their homes, while Aboriginal residents of Townsville have received repeated death threats. Not surprisingly Darwin and Townsville, the military staging grounds for Australian imperialism's occupation forces abroad, are particular hotbeds of redneck racism.

Down With the Witchhunt of Geoff Clark!

The anti-Aboriginal ideological offensive also serves to justify government attacks on Aboriginal organisations. The ruling class is on a warpath against these organisations because they want to crush even the most minimal pretence of an independent Aboriginal voice. The fact that many of these organisations were created by the Hawke and Keating ALP [Australian Labor Party] governments to coopt outspoken Aboriginal leaders and make Aborigines complicit in their own subjugation is not enough for today's federal Coalition and state ALP governments. The main target has been the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), the government's leading indigenous body. ATSIC has been stripped of its spending power and its leaders, despite their loyal service to the Howard government, have been witchhunted.

In August, Phillip Ruddock, the then federal minister for immigration and indigenous affairs, suspended the elected chairman of ATSIC, Geoff Clark, for "misbehaviour." Ruddock, who is widely hated for spearheading the racist internment of refugees, used as his pretext Clark's recent conviction on charges of "behaving in a riotous manner" and "obstructing police" over an incident last year at the Criterion Hotel in the Victorian coastal town of Warrnambool. In fact Clark carried out the courageous and decent act of defending Aborigines—including women and elders—against a racist publican [barkeeper], notorious for refusing to serve blacks, and police wielding capsicum [pepper] spray guns. While Clark's conviction for "riotous behaviour" has been overturned in a court appeal, the other conviction and a $750 fine stands, and he has been banned from the hotel.

Clark is also the subject of recently revived murky rape allegations, dating back decades. While we are not in a position to judge his guilt or innocence in this case, his conviction stemming from the Warrnambool incident was a racist outrage which underlines the bourgeoisie's impulse to drive all Aboriginal people back to the desperate poverty-ridden fringes of outback towns.

Clark's convictions stem from events on 1 May 2002 when Aboriginal people had, for the first time, been admitted to the members enclosure of the Warrnambool races. On that day Clark was hosting people from his community in a marquee [large tent] rather than the tin shed normally reserved for Aborigines. Soon however Clark and his friends would run smack bang into the vicious social reality of White Australia.

On leaving the races they went to the Grand Hotel where the racist publican closed his hotel down rather than serve Aborigines. The group then moved on to the Criterion Hotel where another racist publican again confronted them and cops were quickly called to remove some of Clark's friends. When Clark protested and called on his friends to "Stand firm and stand your ground" he and others were set upon by police and attacked with capsicum spray causing Clark to be taken to hospital. The cold hard facts are that Geoff Clark was targeted by the cops and courts of Bracks' [Victoria] state ALP government and then suspended from ATSIC by the federal Tory minister because he stood against the barbaric enforced denial of Aboriginal people to equal access to amenities. Overturn the remaining conviction! Down with the racist suspension of Geoff Clark!

What is needed is the broadest action of trade unionists, Aborigines and anti-racist youth to protest the witchhunt of Clark and combat the racist exclusion that Aboriginal people face. In the early 1990s, the Spartacist League brought trade unionists, including Maori building workers and members of local Aboriginal communities together with students to break a racist exclusion which had prevented Aborigines from drinking at the Student Prince Hotel near Sydney University (see "Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel," *Australasian Spartacist* supplement, 2 June 1993). This small but powerful action gives a taste of the struggle that a mass revolutionary party would wage to mobilise the power of the working class in defence of Aboriginal people and all the oppressed.

The potential for politically advanced workers to be won to such a fight is linked to the fact that the increasing levels of degradation of Aborigines are part of all-sided capitalist attacks on the working class and the poor. Union-busting, such as attempted against the CFMEU [Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union] today, goes hand in hand with speedups and other attacks on working conditions resulting in escalating numbers of workers killed on the job. On 16 October, a 16-year-old Sydney plumber's apprentice, Joel Exner, died after his boss failed to supply him with a safety harness.

Indeed since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union a decade ago, capitalist governments worldwide have been slashing public health care and education, eroding the living standards of the working class and effectively throwing "unprofitable" sections of the population overboard. In Australia, this is coupled with virulent racism to scapegoat indigenous peoples, Asian and Arab minorities and refugees in a divide-and-conquer tactic aimed at deflecting the anger of the working class away from the attacks of the bosses.

The fight for an uncompromising working-class defence of Aboriginal peoples is thus an important part of the strug-

gle to politically arm the proletariat into a force that can take on the capitalist rulers and win. Proletarian-centred actions would fight to enforce equal access to public and private amenities. They would demand jobs for all and equal wages; and for massive health, housing and education programs to begin to address the marginalisation and oppression of the Aboriginal people in remote areas, in the wretched fringes and inner-city ghettos. The SL supports any attempts by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to claw back some of the land which has been stolen from them. Where Aboriginal land rights come up against socially useful developments like hydroelectric projects or railways, the Aboriginal peoples should receive generous compensation for any deprivation of land or disruption of activity, based on completely consensual agreement. However, elementary justice—not only for Aboriginal people, but for all the exploited and oppressed—demands not some limited, ultimately reversible concessions from the bosses but the expropriation of industry, mining and agriculture from the greedy exploiters through proletarian revolution.

Bourgeois Reaction and Aboriginal Women

The capitalist media have been trimphantly lauding Aboriginal "leaders" like Noel Pearson and Mick Dodson who have obscenely called on the racist government to "help" Aboriginal people stop doing harm to themselves. Their statements have embellished the cynical platitudes of concern for Aboriginal women and children recently mouthed by some elements in the white ruling class. Such platitudes from the racist exploiters are the most revolting hypocrisy! This is the same ruling class who used brutal violence and repression to force Aboriginal children into being domestic or agricultural slaves of the squatters [white farmers] last century and who denies recognition, let alone redress, for the Stolen Generations

Australasian Spartacist

Spartacists call for labor-centered fight against racist terror at 1993 Melbourne protest against cop killing of a young Aborigine.

[Aboriginal children taken from their families by the government]. This is the ruling class which presides over one of the highest infant death rates in the world for Aboriginal children and which imprisons refugee children in desolate hellhole camps from Baxter to [the South Pacific island of] Nauru.

Aboriginal women, particularly those in poverty-stricken communities, are triply oppressed by race, gender and class. Capitalist Australia is an extremely misogynist society where the anti-woman cult of "mateship" is glorified. A survey in 1988 found that 20 percent of the general population condoned wife-beating. Aboriginal women in particular are subject to the harshest conditions of capitalist rule. They are systematically shut out of employment, having to bring up children in the broiling outback heat often without a semblance of decent education, health or

Christine Howes

August 2002: Protest against Queensland state Labor Party government by Aboriginal workers and families who had their wages stolen for decades.

child care, housing, electricity or even running water. And with the fabric of Aboriginal communities torn asunder by colonial dispossession and brutalised by daily state terror, indigenous women confront high rates of violent assault, rape and murder. It is within this context that many Aboriginal people have made heartfelt appeals within their communities for an end to the endemic violence and abuse. But the feigned "concern" for indigenous women and children coming from the capitalist rulers is purely aimed at vilifying Aborigines as "violent" and providing an excuse for even more racist state repression.

Given the ongoing state terror it is understandable that many Aboriginal women refuse to call authorities when confronted with violent abuse of children or themselves because to do so places them, their men or children in the cross hairs of the state. While it is well known that detention can often be a death sentence for black men, it is not so well known that indigenous children are today removed from their families at six times the rate of non-indigenous children, or that nearly one-third of the NSW [New South Wales] female prison population is Aboriginal! *Indeed the great instigator of violence against indigenous women is the capitalist state itself.*

The brutality of police and prison in black lives is bitterly captured in a story from the women's peace protest outside the Pine Gap [joint U.S./Australian] spy base 20 years ago. In November 1983 protesters were dragged en masse to Alice Springs' police lock-up. The next morning, a delegation of local Aboriginal women thanked the mainly white city women for filling up the prison. No Aboriginal woman had been raped by cops or screws in the jail, they said, for the first night in living memory.

Break with Laborism!

The road to liberation for indigenous women, for all Aboriginal peoples and all the oppressed lies in the struggle to mobilise the social power of the multiracial working class *against* the capitalist rulers and their state. While the history of working-class defence of indigenous peoples in Australia is all too slender, such events when they occur reverberate powerfully, including throughout the Asian region. The spectacular storming of parliament in Canberra, August 1996 by militant Aborigines, unionists and youth is one example. This action, at a 35,000-strong demonstration protesting against the Howard government's attacks on welfare and union rights, was sparked when cops attacked an Aboriginal contingent at the head of a march of Aborigines and unionists, and the building workers, miners and others rushed to defend the Aboriginal protesters.

In Brisbane on 8 August this year, the Queensland Council of Unions held a small but significant protest against the Beattie ALP state government's insulting offer of $4,000 or $2,000 to Aboriginal workers whose wages were "held in trust" by governments and looted for decades. The protest called for full reparation to all workers fighting to reclaim stolen wages, which even the Queensland government admits amounts to at least $500 million in that state alone!

Standing in the way of unleashing the power of the integrated working class in defence of themselves and all the oppressed is the current pro-capitalist Laborite leadership in the unions and the racist backward consciousness it transmits to, and reinforces within, the proletariat. Following the 1996 storming of parliament, the traitorous ALP/ACTU [Australian Council of Trade Unions] leadership collaborated with a vicious state witchhunt, fingering militants to the cops and carrying out an internal purge of the anti-racist unionists. This was a pledge by key union bureaucrats to prevent the organised workers ever again defending Aboriginal people from racist state terror. Today, while unions have protested the Queensland government's refusal to hand back stolen wages to Aboriginal workers, they have not mobilised union power in the necessary strike action to win the back pay for the workers and their families. Instead, Queensland CFMEU leaders for example have told Aboriginal people to look to the thieving state's own Industrial Relations Commission.

Acting as the labour lieutenants of capital, the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy demobilises the union ranks, preaches submission to the bosses' courts and channels proletarian struggles into the dead end of ALP parliamentarism. An internationalist revolutionary workers party—a tribune of the people—must be built by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the nationalist leadership.

But this is not the perspective of the various reformist and centrist left groups. A case in point is the centrist Workers Power (WP) group. While building illusions in the bourgeois state, for example through their *ritual* call to vote for the racist ALP (which in power administers the capitalist state), they simultaneously push rhetoric opposing national, sexual and racial oppression. This is highlighted with regard to the Aboriginal struggle, where in one breath WP calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Hawke/Keating ALP's whitewash Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and in the next declares that Aborigines have "the right to be free of the police and judicial oppression." WP also calls for Aborigines to have "the right to administer justice within the communities, because whitefellas' justice in the indigenous communities is nothing more than the business of keeping people in place while the theft [of lands and resources] goes on" (*The Socialist Solution to Market Madness*, May 2001).

While we defend whatever political autonomy Aboriginal people (with a land base) can wrest from governments, including the right to govern their land and control its resources, we also understand that as long as the capitalist exploiters hold state power, any "justice" will necessarily be subordinate to the white racist ruling class and its state. This capitalist state—which at its core consists of the police, courts, military and prisons—was created and is reinforced and perfected daily for the very purpose of enforcing capitalist class rule over the exploited and oppressed masses.

WP's verbiage notwithstanding, the bottom line is that, in pushing for implementing the findings of the bourgeois court's Royal Commission, they sow illusions in and tie Aborigines and workers to the main force for Aboriginal oppression—the capitalist state. And while WP fatuously declares that the "police must be held to account for every death" they don't breathe a word that the Royal Commission into deaths in custody *endorsed* the police and coroner verdicts of "suicide" and "death by natural causes" in all 99 cases it reviewed. In other words all the killer cops walked! It was the SL that warned from the start that the Royal Commission would result in a whitewash.

It is no accident then that WP, who also "call on the labour movement to support every demand of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders," don't address the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats who are the key obstacle to proletarian-centred struggle for indigenous rights.

In contrast to WP, genuine communists fight to combat illusions that the capitalist state can act on behalf of the oppressed and fight to expose the role of the Labor traitors within the workers movement. This is key to preparing and training the proletariat for the workers revolution that alone can free itself. Aboriginal people and all the downtrodden from racist capitalist state terror while opening the road to the eradication of poverty, the liberation of women and the ending of racial oppression. As we explained in our programmatic statement:

> "Only the destruction of capitalism can hold out the possibility of voluntary integration, on the basis of full equality, for those Aboriginal people who desire it, and the fullest possible autonomy for those who do not, and make it possible to address the special needs created by more than two centuries of injustice and oppression."
>
> —*For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!*, October 1998

Racist Australian Imperialists Groove on Aboriginal Dispossession

The publication in 2002 of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, by right-wing ideologue, Keith Windschuttle, sparked just outrage. Windschuttle seeks to disappear the attempted genocide of the Aboriginal peoples. Henry Reynolds, a historian who has meticulously documented the more than two hundred years of dispossession of Aboriginal peoples, noted in one *Sydney Morning Herald* review (23-24 August 2003), that Windschuttle's "critique" is an attempt to resurrect the concept of *terra nullius*, the lie that Australia was "vacant property" at the time of British landing. Such lies are

continued on page 10

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Mexican Trotskyists Say:

For Workers Mobilizations Against NAFTA, FTAA!

Part One of this article, which we conclude below, appeared in WV *No. 819 (6 February). This article is reprinted from* Espartaco *No. 20 (Spring-Summer 2003), newspaper of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.*

ESPARTACO

PART TWO

In Mexico there are more than six million indigenous people. Only a workers and peasants government will guarantee fundamental rights to these dispossessed masses, such as the right to govern their own lands and resources, introducing bilingual education into their communities and laying the basis for the complete integration into society of the indigenous peoples who desire to do so, on the basis of the fullest equality.

The inseparable link between the unresolved broad democratic demands and the international and socialist struggle of the proletariat is at the heart of the theory of permanent revolution, formulated by Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky and confirmed in practice by the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917. At that time, the Russian working class took in its hands the tasks of the democratic revolution which the bourgeois regime hadn't been able to solve: it repudiated the foreign debt acquired by the tsar and the bourgeoisie, granted full equality to women and passed laws against any kind of discrimination against homosexuals and ethnic minorities. It also abolished private ownership of land and called on the poor peasantry to begin an ***agrarian revolution*** to destroy the large rural estates and the remains of feudal peonage. But to make all this a reality, it was necessary to expropriate ***all*** the property that the bourgeoisie had and to establish a collectivized and planned economy and a monopoly on foreign trade. These measures laid the first foundations for the socialist reorganization of society.

The agrarian program of the Mexican workers state must culminate in a voluntary collectivization of the land, which gradually transforms small ownership into highly industrialized collective farms. This would transform peasants into rural proletarians on the basis of productivity and abundance impossible under capitalism, and would in this way overcome the gap that currently exists between life in the countryside and life in the city.

For Marxists, imperialism is not only an immoral policy that the American rulers like Bush decide to engage in because they are very bad (even though they are). Imperialism is a concrete historical category which describes an unavoidable phase in the development of capitalism. In Lenin's words, imperialism is "the parasitism and decay of capitalism." Lenin explained that:

> "Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital [the fusion of industrial and banking capital] is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed."
>
> —*Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)

Having reached a certain degree of development in the most industrialized capitalist countries, finance capital requires the militarization and national subjugation of the more backward capitalist countries. So-called "globalization" in reality is nothing more than a quantitative increase in the export of capital, and in the case of Mexico, NAFTA and privatizations are ways of sweeping away the last restrictions on this export.

That is why the imperialist system of war and subjugation cannot simply be changed by a change in the ruling elite. Nor can it be changed through the mere pressure of the masses; it will exist as long as capitalism exists.

As one of the founding documents of Trotsky's Fourth International stated:

> "The 'good neighbor' policy is nothing but the attempt to unify the Western Hemisphere under the hegemony of Washington, as a solid block wielded by the latter in its drive to close the door of the two American continents to all the foreign imperialist powers except itself. This policy is materially supplemented by the favorable trade agreements which the United States seeks to conclude with the Latin American countries in the hope of systematically edging its rivals out of the market....
>
> "The struggle against American imperialism is therefore at the same time a struggle against the coming imperialist war and for the liberation of oppressed colonial and semicolonial peoples. Hence, it is inseparable from the class struggle of the American proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie, and cannot be conducted apart from it....
>
> "Only a union of the Latin American peoples, striving towards the goal of a united socialist America and allied in the struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States, would present a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism."
>
> —"Thesis on the World Role of American Imperialism" (1938)

AP

August 2001: Trade-union demonstration in Buenos Aires demands unemployment benefits. Masses of workers and poor in Argentina took to streets in opposition to IMF austerity measures.

The Political Struggle to Forge a Leninist Workers Vanguard

To achieve this program, it is not enough to proclaim it; it is necessary to identify the obstacles to it and declare an implacable political war on these in order to place the revolutionary program at the head of the proletarian movement. Currently, a significant portion of the Mexican proletariat is organized in unions which have the power to stop virtually the entire production process and force the bourgeoisie to its knees. The problem is that the current leaderships of these unions act as real transmission belts for bourgeois ideology and consciously obstruct any development of a revolutionary class consciousness. For decades, the Mexican bourgeoisie has used the corporatist structure to keep the powerful labor unions tied to bourgeois politics and in particular to the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]. Today, the biggest union federations, like the CTM [Mexican Labor Federation], the CROM [Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers], etc., are still affiliated with the decrepit PRI, with pro-capitalist leaderships accustomed to keeping themselves at the helm of the unions through gangsterism against their members, corruption and the tutelage of the bourgeois state.

But there are also the so-called "independent" unions, like the SME [Mexican Electricians Union] and the ones affiliated to the UNT [National Union of Workers], which were able to free themselves of the corporatist chains only to fall into the hands of leaderships which do not question bourgeois rule either. These leaderships, generally composed of PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] leaders, resort mostly to ideological means to keep their positions at the helm of the unions, and they can afford the luxury of a relative degree of union democracy. But, in the final analysis, their function is the same: to derail the power of working-class struggle into support for one or another party of the bourgeoisie.

We communists fight to strengthen the organization of workers and for the unionization of all workers, and we stand for the defense of the existing unions against any attack by the bourgeois state. Our guiding principle in the fight to replace the current pro-bourgeois union leaderships with an internationalist and revolutionary leadership, both in the corporatist and the "independent" unions, is achieving and defending the ***political independence*** of the workers movement from the state and the bosses' parties. We Spartacists have been unique in our principled opposition to the bourgeois state persecuting union leaders (as in the case of the oil workers union during "Pemexgate" [when in 2002 the state intervened in the oil workers union under the pretext that the union had given funds borrowed from PEMEX to the PRI for the 2000 presidential elections]) even when we do not have any sympathy whatsoever for their politics. Cleaning up the unions is exclusively the business of the workers (see "Estado Burgués: ¡Manos fuera del STPRM!" [Bourgeois State: Hands Off the STPRM!] *Espartaco* No. 18, Spring-Summer 2002). ***Bourgeois state: hands off the unions! The CTM belongs to the workers—break with the PRI! No illusions in the PRD and its union stooges!***

The ideological glue the union misleaders use to keep the workers faithful to their exploiters' dictates is nationalism, the main obstacle to the development of revolutionary consciousness among the workers. According to this false consciousness, the national interest that supposedly unites all Mexicans against all non-Mexicans must prevail over any internal conflict. In fact, this bourgeois ideology seeks to politically subordinate the exploited to their brutal local exploiters and to separate them from their

Viktor Bulla

Bolshevik Revolution brought working class to power in Russia. Putilov factory workers meet for Petrograd Soviet elections, 1920.

real allies, the workers in the rest of the world. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained:

> "Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just,' 'purest,' most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built, with every international trust, and every workers' association."
>
> —"Critical Remarks on the National Question" (1913)

For Class-Struggle Leadership of the Unions!

Many see union leaderships such as that of the SME as a consistent opposition to the bourgeoisie. But the SME leadership is a bureaucracy with a ***pro-capitalist program***. Its strategy against privatization seeks to pressure the bourgeois parties and keep the ranks demobilized. Thus, last September SME's Ramón Pacheco and José Almazán met with Madrazo, the president of the PRI, to invite this decaying bourgeois party to commemorate with the SME the nationalization of the electrical industry. Pacheco used the meeting to "acknowledge" the participation of the PRI senators in the rejection of Fox's privatizing schemes. But Fox is merely pursuing the course laid out by his PRI predecessors de la Madrid, Salinas and Zedillo!

As we wrote in the middle of the combative UNAM student strike in 1999:

> "The entire campaign against privatization by the SME has been based on bourgeois nationalism and consciously designed by the union leadership to avoid class-struggle mobilization. Thus, the SME called for a strike several months ago demanding a salary increase. However, the bureaucracy accepted the crumbs offered by the company and withdrew the strike call, as *Lux* [SME's journal] itself states, so as to 'not add this conflict to the actions pursued by the union against privatization,' as if the workers' living standards had nothing to do with the privatizing onslaught!... [The bureaucrats] want to appear 'radical' and 'combative' in order to have greater pressure power on the bourgeoisie and thus maintain their privileges, while they keep the working class tied. That is the reason why the electricians are ***not*** on strike."
>
> —"¡Forjar un partido obrero revolucionario!" [Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!], *Espartaco* supplement, 22 July 1999

In a speech delivered last August 21 at a rally in front of the senate, SME's secretary general Rosendo Flores said, in the middle of pretentious odes to nationalism:

> "How can anybody say that this Initiative [Fox's privatization plan] indeed maintains the state's control and safeguards the country's sovereignty, when it buries the essence of the nationalization that in 1960 led president López Mateos—yes, *Señor Presidente* Adolfo López Mateos—to break the pressures and blackmailing by the foreign owners of the electrical industry at that time."

"*El Señor Presidente*" López Mateos, object of Flores' pretentious sappiness, was the perpetrator of the crushing of the great railroad strike of 1958-59. López Mateos sent the army to repress the combative strikers with blood and fire, even putting their neighborhoods under siege, in what was one of the major historical defeats inflicted on the Mexican proletariat. As a result of breaking the strike, "*Señor Presidente*" laid off over 10,000 railroad workers and jailed their leaders, among them Demetrio Vallejo and Valentín Campa. Freedom for the imprisoned railroad workers was one of the demands of the 1968 student movement. The vengeful government kept some of them, like Campa, in jail, until 1970!

Having accused the striking railroad workers of being "anti-patriots," López Mateos called for help from the CIA, which sent one Dean Stephanski to map out the strategy. The government accused two Soviet diplomats of leading the strike! Valentín Campa quotes American journalist Dean Pearson in October 1959:

> "'On this occasion [he is referring to the railroad strike] the ex-Labor Secretary and friend of the workers [López Mateos —GEM] imprisoned the agitators and accused them of "promoting social dissolution," a crime stipulated in Mexican codes. At the same time he ordered the expulsion of the Soviet Embassy attachés, because he considered them the instigators of workers' unrest. Since then [Pearson continues] El ["*Señor*"—GEM] presidente López Mateos has considerably strengthened the Mexican currency' (with the help of the U.S. Treasury Department and the International Monetary Fund)."
>
> —Valentín Campa, *Mi testimonio* [insertions in brackets are the author's unless otherwise noted]

As Fidel Velázquez [historic CTM leader] would say, thank you *Señor Presidente*!

To unchain the power of the working class, what's required is to ***sweep away*** the current pro-capitalist leaderships, such as the SME's, which sow suicidal illusions in the bourgeoisie and its government, and to replace them with revolutionary leaderships. To achieve that, it is necessary to wage a sharp political struggle to win the ranks over to the program of revolutionary Marxism. As Trotsky wrote in his unfinished article, "The Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay" [1940]:

> "The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.... In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in action, the organs of proletarian revolution."

The Fake Revolutionaries

Between those with overt impulses toward class collaboration, who make up the right wing of the workers movement, and we revolutionaries who make up the left wing, there is an intermediate tendency which talks like the revolutionaries but acts like the collaborationists at every decisive juncture. This tendency is what we call ***centrism***. Capable of winning youth, workers and others who honestly want to fight for socialist revolution and misleading them toward reformist politics, centrism is particularly dangerous and, therefore, it is particularly important to unmask it. The Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo-ContraCorriente (LTS-CC) and the Internationalist Group (IG) are, each one in their own way, perfect examples of centrism in Mexico.

The LTS claims to be Trotskyist, but the motivation behind all their politics is a systematic adaptation to the current nationalist leaderships of the workers movement, which always orbit around the bourgeois PRD. That is the case with the leadership of the SME. The LTS laments that the SME leadership is linked to the PRD and has an entirely nationalist program. But in deeds the LTS seeks to act as a "left" adviser to the bureaucracy, helping it maintain its "combative" credentials in front of the membership, and thus helps to perpetuate the bureaucracy's position.

AP

Mexico City, February 16: Workers carrying pictures of Lenin, Engels and Marx march against government plans to privatize Mexico's energy industry.

In reality, the LTS tails the nationalist politics of collaboration with the bourgeoisie which drive the bureaucracy, and the LTS serves as the bureaucracy's "left" cover. Thus, the LTS raises the hypocritical call: "the existing unions and worker organizations such as the Frente Nacional de Resistencia contra la Privatización de la Industria Eléctrica [FNRCPIE—National Front of Resistance Against the Privatization of the Electrical Industry] and the currents inside the different unions which consider themselves democratic must lead this struggle, trusting neither any bourgeois politician nor the treacherous mechanisms of the regime" (*Estrategia Obrera* No. 21, 6 November 2001). But the FNRCPIE itself includes the PRI's Corriente Democrática [Democratic Current], the PRD and even PAN [National Action Party] leaders in Mexico City! (*La Jornada*, 27 February 1999).

Claiming a Trotskyist orthodoxy that has little to do with its real political practice, an LTS manifesto correctly states that "the denial of the role of the working class [as a vanguard] is the preamble to a policy which renounces the struggle against the bourgeois and bureaucratic leaderships and, on the contrary, is subordinated to the PRD and its 'oppositional' bureaucracy." In the same way, the manifesto criticizes the reformist POS [Partido Obrero Socialista] for its capitulation to the Zapatistas: "The POS, meanwhile, unfortunately called on the EZLN [Zapatistas] to lead the struggle for a workers and peasants government and defined it as an '***independent***' (that is, ***independent from the bourgeoisie***) leadership, just as it was about to negotiate with the regime." This denunciation becomes a tasteless joke when spoken by the LTS, which during the UNAM strike distinguished itself for, among other things, its call to build a National Coordinating Committee Against Repression to unite all the forces on the left and the workers movement...under EZLN leadership! In a typical flyer, published in August 1999, the LTS-ContraCorriente wrote:

> "We must fuse our struggles to confront the regime's attack in a National Coordinating Committee Against Repression. It is essential that the EZLN lead the call to create it, to organize the resistance at a national scale. The [Zapatista] demo the 23rd in San Cristóbal de Las Casas is an example to follow."

As Oscar Wilde said, "Hypocrisy is the homage vice pays to virtue."

In *Estrategia Obrera* No. 30 (22 January 2003), the LTS polemicizes against an article by Sergio Rodriguez Lazcano and criticizes the EZLN for not wanting to seize power, and concludes: "The author [Rodríguez Lazcano] intends to lay the foundation for a reformist practice that refuses to fight for power. The struggle of Zapata was, instead, direct combat against the state without confidence in the powerful and their representatives." In fact, the peasant armies of Zapata and Villa ***occupied*** Mexico City in 1914 only to withdraw soon after, incapable of satisfying their own demands. The narrow demands for more democracy and land distribution in their towns, such as the Plan de Ayala, were not sufficient to give Villa and Zapata a national political program and to keep power in the urban centers. Like the EZLN, Zapata's was a movement based on the peasantry and, correspondingly, it was limited by that same ideology.

While in the same paper the LTS says that "it is fundamentally the unity with the industrial and service workers which can give strength to the demands of the countryside and make possible their solution," their rejection of the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution is rendered transparent in their assertion that "the best way to guarantee triumph is to put the leadership in the hands of the great mass of poor peasants, which already showed its revolutionary potential in 1910." But in his "Basic Postulates" of permanent revolution, Trotsky explained that "no matter how great the revolutionary role of the peasantry may be, it nevertheless cannot be an independent role and even less a leading one. The peasant follows either the worker or the bourgeois." Trotsky expanded:

> "3. Not only the agrarian, but also the national question assigns to the peasantry...an exceptional place in the democratic revolution. Without an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed. But the alliance of these two classes can be realized in no other way than through an irreconcilable struggle against the influence of the national-liberal bourgeoisie.
>
> "4. No matter what the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in the individual countries, the realization of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political leadership of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the Communist Party. This in turn means that the victory of the democratic revolution is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat which bases itself upon the alliance with the peasantry and solves first of all the tasks of the democratic revolution."
>
> —*The Permanent Revolution* (1931)

Another centrist group which tries to pose as revolutionary is the so-called "Internationalist Group," a handful of renegades that defected from our organization in 1996. But the content of this group's politics could not be any further away from revolutionary politics. In its appetite to adapt to the pro-PRD "left" milieu, this group has even come up with the union-busting position of rejecting all the struggles by the unions which are not led by the PRD. Treacherously manipulating the hatred many workers feel toward the truly rotten PRI leaderships of the corporatist unions, the IG has stubbornly maintained that the CTM unions "represent the *class enemy*"(*El Internacionalista/Edición México*, May 2001), and that, instead of defending them against attacks by the state, a "class fight" must be waged against them (a slogan the Fox government is following to the letter). Curiously, the IG does not maintain this position regarding corporatist unions in other countries (such as Algeria, Argentina and even Venezuela, where the CTV [Confederation of Venezuelan Workers] bureaucracy is infamous for its pro-CIA politics), because it still has to find a

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Immigration...

(continued from page 1)

governments (especially in California) effected, by one means or another, the repatriation of almost half a million Mexican immigrants, some of whom were naturalized U.S. citizens. With unemployment skyrocketing, displaced farmers and workers from the Midwest and South filled the positions of the deported Mexican workers in the fields.

With the labor shortages during World War II accompanied by the internment in concentration camps of Japanese Americans, many of whom worked in agriculture, liberal Democratic president Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated the *bracero* program. This program, which lasted for two decades, placed millions of Mexican farm workers under conditions of virtual bondage to their American agribusiness employers. Part of their wages was typically withheld, to be supposedly paid when they returned to Mexico. *Braceros* from the 1950s and '60s are still suing the U.S. and Mexican governments for wages that they never got. It is little wonder that Latino rights activists have dubbed Bush's current immigration plan the "Wal-Mart Bracero Program."

In the mid-1950s, however, the Eisenhower administration launched a military-style campaign, Operation Wetback, commanded by a retired army general, in which 1.3 million Mexican men, women and children were rounded up and deported. With Bill Clinton's signing of the "Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act" and the "Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act" in 1996, by 2000 the number of immigrants dying as they tried to cross the southern U.S. border had more than quadrupled.

We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants; all those who arrive here, by whatever means, should have the full rights available to all Americans. Thrown together in large-scale industry, workers have the power not just to redress the depredations of exploitation and improve their lot through class struggle but also, as an organized social force, to lead the struggles against all oppression and injustice and overturn capitalist oppression and exploitation through social revolution.

Working-Class Unity and the Struggle for Immigrant Rights

Throughout American history, this country's rulers have repeatedly used ethnic and racial chauvinism, including anti-immigrant demagogy, to intensify domestic repression and to maintain their dominance. More importantly, with the growth of industry, the bosses have used such campaigns to set worker against worker, thus vitiating united labor struggle. This is particularly expressed in the racial oppression of black people, the bedrock of American capitalism, which serves to keep the proletariat divided and politically backward.

At the same time, working-class struggle is systematically sabotaged from within by the labor bureaucracy, dubbed a century ago "the labor lieutenants of capital" by the socialist leader Daniel De Leon. These types constitute the very top stratum of the aristocracy of labor, that small portion of the working class that feeds off the crumbs from the sumptuous tables of their imperialist bosses.

In particular, AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and his generation of union tops are heirs to those recruited by America's rulers after the end of World War II to drive the reds, who had played a key role in building mass industrial unions in the 1930s, out of the labor movement. If not inspired currently by the frothing anti-Communism of the McCarthyite witch-hunt, they are no less committed than their predecessors to the American imperialist order and to labor-management collaboration schemes. Politically, this unholy marriage of counterposed class interests is maintained by their integration into and subservience to the Democratic Party, the supposed left wing of the U.S. ruling class.

The Democratic Clinton administration greatly intensified the militarization of the U.S./Mexico border. Clinton's 1996 immigration reform act called for deporting even longtime permanent residents ("green card" holders) for trivial offenses committed years before. Since the rise of the right-wing Bush administration, the Democrats have if anything baited Bush for being insufficiently zealous in prosecuting the "war on terror," which is in the first place aimed at immigrants, particularly those from predominantly Muslim and Arab countries. In fact, most of the immigrants currently detained by the Bush regime are being held not under the draconian USA-Patriot Act, but rather under Clinton's 1996 "anti-terrorism" act.

The labor tops attempt to appeal to the bosses through their advocacy of "America-first" protectionism. This has been, for example, the main approach of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy in its opposition to the NAFTA and FTAA free-trade agreements. The union tops argue that by "protecting" American industry from foreign competition, American workers will benefit and the outflow of jobs from the U.S. will be stopped. This is false; the capitalists will do what they need to do in order to increase their profit margins—either by intensifying exploitation of workers at home or by moving jobs to countries where labor costs are cheaper. Protectionism is deadly poison for workers in the U.S. because it spreads the illusion that their enemies are the workers of other countries and not the American capitalist class at home. In opposition to protectionism, the labor movement must fight for international labor solidarity, linking the economic and other struggles of workers in the U.S. with those of workers around the world, particularly in such Third World countries as Mexico. This is how the labor movement must struggle against NAFTA and the FTAA.

As a corollary of their sellouts and as a component of their chauvinist protectionism, the union tops have normally been in the forefront of anti-immigrant campaigns, hoping to direct anger in their ranks away from their betrayals. However, the current size of the immigrant labor force in the U.S. has compelled the union tops to tone down their anti-immigrant fulminations and to offer some union support to immigrants. Thus, in February 2000, the AFL-CIO issued a call for amnesty for six million undocumented workers, while not failing to simultaneously accompany this gesture with a call for criminal penalties against employers who recruit "illegals" and thundering against immigrant worker programs that "discriminate against U.S. workers."

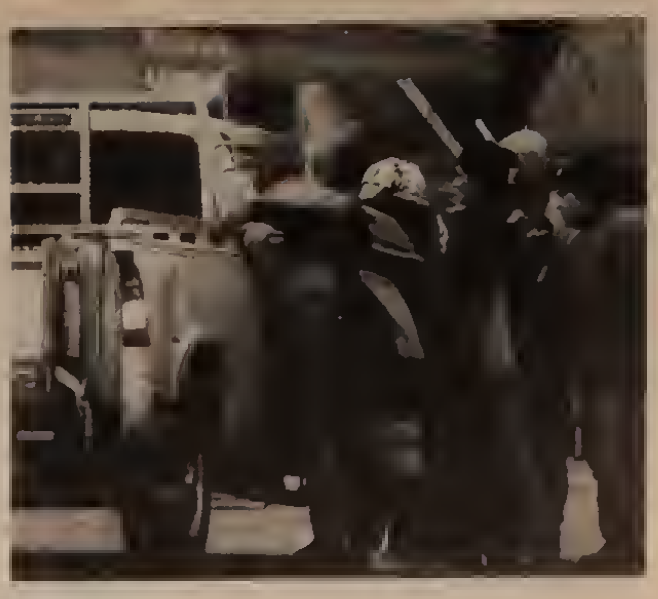
The many millions from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America who have crossed the border to work in this country in recent years bring with them traditions of labor and union militancy. Witness the situation in Los Angeles, which in just over a decade has been transformed from an open-shop employer's paradise to the center of labor strikes and class conflict in the U.S.

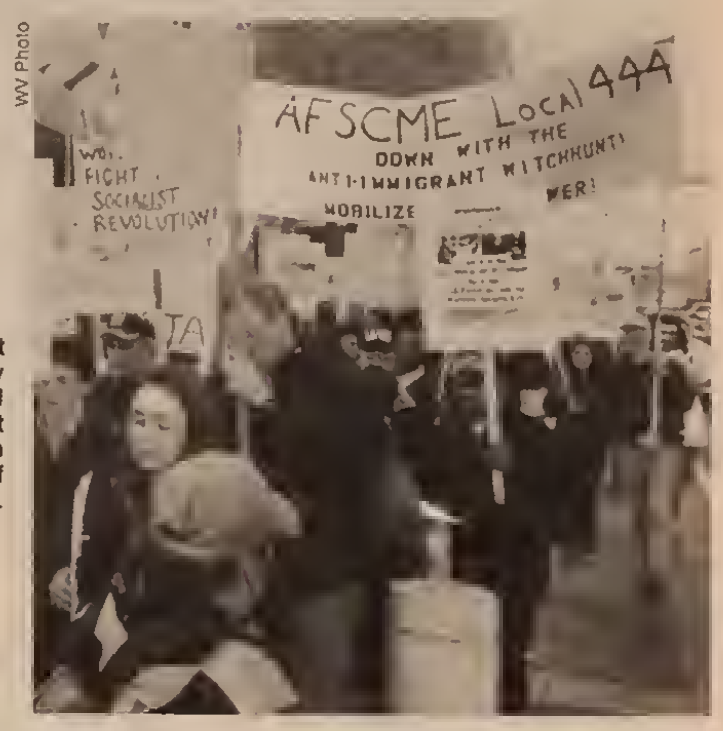
Although some union organization has gone on among immigrants, the union bureaucracy is not disposed to greatly expand these minimal efforts. Last year, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy organized the "Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride," mobilizing thousands of immigrant workers and their allies in order to pressure Congress to provide an undefined "road to citizenship." But the whole thrust of the rallies held across the country was to boost the electoral fortunes of the Democratic Party. What is necessary is that the labor movement fight to organize immigrant workers into the unions, as part of the struggle for full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

The refusal of the labor tops to take up the fight for immigrant rights has been put in sharp relief during the four-month-long grocery workers strike against Safeway and others in Southern California, where the tops of the United Food and Commercial Workers have resisted pleas

AP photos

Bush with Mexican president Vicente Fox in Monterrey, January 12. Impoverished immigrant day laborers seek work in Dallas, a scene repeated daily in cities across the country.





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Union contingent at 9 February 2002 Oakland united-front protest in defense of immigrant rights.

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from their ranks for an organizing drive at Wal-Mart, where a large component of the workforce is immigrant. The unionization of Wal-Mart, the largest private employer in this country, would be a giant step forward for the labor movement and could ignite the struggle for union rights in all sectors of the working class.

The racist imperialist rulers of this country have promoted prejudice among workers, and the national chauvinism of the union bureaucracy serves to magnify such bigotry. Black people have been less than equal, indeed, considered less than human, for over 350 years in the U.S. From the days of slavery, through the years of Jim Crow and up to the present, anti-black racism has underpinned the whole structure of American capitalism. As waves of immigrants gradually assimilated into mainstream American society, black people, who had been in the Americas as long as anyone else with Old World antecedents, remained forcibly segregated. At the same time, they have long been a strategic part of the working class. The fight for the emancipation of labor through a socialist revolution in this country is impossible unless the working class as a whole actively takes up a fight for the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society.

As victims of racist oppression concentrated at the bottom of American society, blacks are that section of the American populace least supportive of flag-waving patriotism and imperialist militarism. Thus, opposition to the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq was substantially greater among blacks than among whites or, for that matter, than among Latinos. But while many immigrants adopt the anti-black sentiments that are prevalent in racist American society, many black people are not immune to anti-immigrant right-wing demagogy.

Much of the black population views Latino immigrants in particular as competing with them at the low end of the job market. For example, in California in 1994, the notorious Proposition 187, which denied health care, education and social services to undocumented immigrants, passed with about 50 percent support from black voters. At the same time, black, Latino and white workers stand shoulder to shoulder during strikes, battling scabs and the scab-herding cops. And black working people are generally sympathetic to labor struggles involving mainly Latino workers, including immigrants. The social organization of labor and the impulse toward working-class unity in struggle are obstacles to the ruling class' attempts to manipulate and inflame national, racial and ethnic divisions.

It is we communists who are the most consistent champions of working-class unity in struggle against the capitalists and their state. Thus in February 2002, the Partisan Defense Committee and Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense organized a labor-centered, united-front protest in Oakland, California against the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act, which calls for "background checks" under which waterfront workers can be fired for any conviction in the past 10 years on any of 20 felony offenses. Called against the witchhunt of immigrants in the name of the "war on terror," the mobilization linked the struggles for labor, black and immigrant rights. As the Spartacist League speaker at the demonstration declared:

> "In fighting every injustice and every oppression, we in the Spartacist League have the aim of making the working class as a whole conscious of its historic tasks: bringing down this whole system of greed, exploitation and war that is capitalism. It's necessary to fight, and in the process forge a party of professional revolutionaries that acts as a tribune of the people—addressing questions like the oppression of women, the right to abortion; a party that fights against anti-gay bigotry; a party that recognizes the centrality of the fight against black oppression in the fight for socialist revolution."

Immigration and the Capitalist Nation-State

In opposition to our proletarian internationalist outlook and program, there are self-described "revolutionary" groups in this country who have adapted to a reactionary nationalist outlook. Such an adaptation is propelled in varying ways by their evaluation of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the first and only successful proletarian revolution to date. Representative of one path is the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). This grouplet is in the historical tradition of those who determined, conjointly with the Cold War mobilization against the USSR by their imperialist masters, that Stalin's rise to bureaucratic dominance made the Soviet Union reactionary in character and thus not deserving of defense against the imperialists. The scope of the betrayal contained in that position can be measured by the social holocaust that has followed the overturns of proletarian rule, however distorted by the bureaucratic overlords, in the USSR and in East Europe between 1989 and 1992. Others who have made such an adaptation are to be found among the ranks of today's anarchists, who share the imperialist analysis that the destruction of those workers states proves that proletarian revolution has no progressive content and thus that a different course (one not coherently described) must be charted.

With respect to the immigrant question, many anarchists call to "open the borders." This was a longtime slogan of the LRP, though they dropped it in 2002, pointing out, "'Open the Borders' is an ambiguous slogan at best and conveys a utopian confusion at its worst.... The idea that any state in the world—especially an imperialist state today—would even begin to tolerate open borders is an impossible fantasy" (*Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2002). The LRP now calls to "End all Restrictions on Immigrants and Refugees." Of course, Marxists oppose reactionary restrictions on immigration by the imperialist states. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in a 1915 letter:

> "In our struggle for true internationalism & against 'jingo-socialism' we always quote in our press the example of the opportunist leaders of the S.P. [Socialist Party] in America, who are in favor of restrictions of the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers.... We think that one can not be internationalist & be at the same time in favor of such restrictions."

However, the LRP's call to "end all restrictions on immigrants" is nothing but the "open borders" slogan refashioned, as it promotes the illusion that the capitalist-imperialist state will end such restrictions—the very "impossible fantasy" the LRP supposedly rejected. In fact, the LRP raises its slogan in conscious counterposition to our call for full citizenship rights, castigating the latter because it applies to immigrants "only when they get here." In reality, the call for full citizenship rights for immigrants is a central and longstanding tenet of Leninism. As Lenin explained in his 1916 document, "Tasks of the Left Zimmerwaldists in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party":

> "In order that acceptance of internationalism by the Swiss Social-Democrats shall not remain an empty and non-committal phrase—to which the adherents of the 'Centre,' and Social-Democrats of the epoch of the Second International generally, always confine themselves—it is necessary, first, consistently and unswervingly to fight for organisational rapprochement between foreign and Swiss workers bringing them together in the same unions, and for their complete equality (civic and political). The specific feature of imperialism in Switzerland is precisely the increasing exploitation of disfranchised foreign workers by the Swiss bourgeoisie, which bases its hopes on estrangement between these two categories of workers."

WV Photo

Predominantly immigrant SEIU Local 1877 (Justice for Janitors) rally in Oakland shortly before June 1996 strike.

For the LRP—whether it's "open the borders" or "end all restrictions on immigrants and refugees"—their calls amount to a demand that all should be able to go where they desire. This seeming heaven on earth has no small measure of reactionary and/or inhuman consequences on the real planet Earth.

Should the American Indians have opened their terrain to the invading European powers? Should the Aztec leader Montezuma have welcomed the Spanish conquistadors with open arms? Should Jews have been allowed unlimited immigration in the aftermath of World War II and the Holocaust into the Palestinian protectorate of British imperialism (a "right" opposed by Palestinian Trotskyists before the formation of the state of Israel)? Or should Mexican regimes in the early 19th century have allowed unfettered American immigration into what is now the American Southwest and California? Or should the East German deformed workers state have opened its borders to counterrevolutionary West German imperialism? (The LRP cheered the counterrevolutionary annexation of East Germany, labeling the workers state "state capitalist.")

In each case, deferring to the "rights" of the intruders resulted in historic injustices on a large scale. As Friedrich Engels observed, civilization has been constructed on a mountain of skulls.

Insofar as such leftists would argue that demands to "open the borders" and other such calls are only to be made on the major capitalist imperialist states, the only powers in the world capable of really defending their borders, it has a fatuously utopian quality. In fact, the only people upon whom no immigration restrictions are imposed by the U.S. are Puerto Ricans. And that is because Puerto Rico is a *colony* of U.S. imperialism. It is largely for fear of losing such privileges that many Puerto Ricans are today reticent about independence.

Since the turn of the 20th century, the main character of human migration has been the need for labor (or the lack of need for labor). In turn, imperialist countries are the only states that have the power to control the mass migrations of peoples. The imperialists will yield to the demands of the LRP and others only when they abjure their "right" to exploit workers, to oppress other nations and to engage in wars of conquest. This will happen just after pigs begin to lay eggs and fly.

The ultimate logic of such a stance is that social questions are to be resolved by the mass migrations of peoples, that is, by an ethnic rat race, rather than through workers taking power. By the LRP's logic, Lenin and the Bolsheviks made a mistake. Instead of fighting for workers revolution, they should have told the hideously oppressed peoples of the tsarist empire to pack up and move elsewhere. Fortunately for the workers (and unfortunately for the Russian tsar and bourgeoisie), the Bolsheviks organized the many captive peoples within the Russian empire as participants in the working-class revolution that overturned the Russian imperialist order.

The dissolution of the prerogatives of the nation-state can only occur in the aftermath of international proletarian revolutions that will unleash economic and social progress from the strictures of the capitalist profit system. The reorganization of society along socialist lines will provide the basis for a tremendous expansion of production minus, to the extent possible, obligatory labor, and thus end human want and establish for the first time the substratum for human freedom, material plenty. Then mankind will indulge in whatever pursuits and activities its individual components desire and, freed from the circumstances of economic scarcity, realize its true potential. Only then will all borders and states disappear.■

NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League's public office will not be open on Saturday, February 21, due to our Black History Month forum. See page 8 for details.

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Strange Postings...

(continued from page 3)

protect themselves and their families back home from SAVAK reprisals.

Today, the rule of the mullahs that toppled the Shah in 1979 itself teeters toward the brink of collapse. Iran's young population doesn't want to live in a theocratic state; women chafe under the veil; students protest the all-sided repression. The historically militant workers movement engages in strikes, with wide popular support, demanding pay which has sometimes been withheld for *years*. The so-called "reformers" recently staged a mass walkout from parliament in protest of the banning by religious hardliners of the Guardian Council of more than 2,400 candidates from the February 20 elections. A massive boycott of the polls is anticipated. It is in this context of a regime on the rocks, the Islamic reformist movement discredited, and restive youth and workers looking for answers, that Taheri attempts to discredit the Marxists by smearing them as supporters of the mullahs.

No mere reporter, Taheri took his provocations to the streets at an antiwar demonstration in London last year. He went as part of an organized group of pro-war counter-demonstrators. In Taheri's own words (*Jerusalem Post*, 21 February 2003): "The Iraqis had come with placards reading 'Freedom for Iraq' and 'American rule, a hundred thousand times better than Takriti tyranny!'" Then, using the oldest trick in the book, this claque wedged its way forward to the podium using a small, elderly Iraqi grandmother as its prow and demanded that Reverend Jesse Jackson give them the microphone. With more than a trace of racism, Taheri concludes his account stating, "The reverend's gorillas closed in to protect his holiness."

To what purpose do the neocons rant? For "regime change" in Iran. On the one hand, there is Taheri, whose main purpose is to promote the monarchists, not direct American intervention, as the "democratic" force to overthrow the mullahs. In an article headlined "Iran Is No Iraq and the US Should Leave It Well Alone," Taheri writes—with a whiff of the chauvinism for which the Persian ruling class is infamous—that "Iraq was a mere torture chamber for a brutal dictator," whereas "the Iranian nation-state" is "one of the oldest in the world" (London *Times*, 18 June 2003).

On the other hand, there is Michael Ledeen, a Zionist neocon who was a major figure behind the Iran-Contragate scandal (where Reagan administration officials and operatives sold weapons to Iran to finance the counterrevolutionary contras in Nicaragua). In his own demented words: "The official news service reported that Bush had threatened Iran with the same treatment he had delivered to Iraq. I can hear the Iranians sighing, 'oh, if only it is true.'... We must liberate Iran in order to win the terror war in Iraq." "Total war" and "creative destruction" are other Ledeen visions: "Creative destruction is our middle name.... A total war strategy does not have to include the intentional targeting of civilians, but the sparing of civilian lives cannot be its first priority" (cited in London *Guardian*, 24 February 2003). Ledeen and his ilk are so far out that they denounce the U.S. State Department and Colin Powell personally as "appeasers."

Abbas/Gamma

UPI

Right: Elite troops of Shah's army parade in Tehran, 1978. Below: Iranian students protest in U.S. wearing masks to protect their identities from murderous secret police, 1977.

Eleana Benador: Stage Manager of Many Dr. Strangeloves

Benador Associates is fronted by Eleana Benador, a Peruvian-born media manipulator who got her start in the neocon world as an adviser to Daniel Pipes' rabidly Zionist right-wing think tank, the Middle East Forum. (Daniel Pipes founded *Campus Watch* and is in the cockpit of the new McCarthyite drive to hound as "anti-Semitic" any professor, group or institution on an American campus which opposes U.S. aid to Israel or has the temerity to defend the Palestinian people.) After the September 11 attacks, Ms. Benador launched her PR business to promote the views of the neocons who shape Bush's foreign policies and those of the right-wing media barons. The London *Financial Times* dubs Ms. Benador a "power behind the throne." Benador's mission is to market the depraved initiative of Condoleezza Rice, who convened a meeting of the National Security Council shortly after 3,000 people were incinerated in the World Trade Center, and told them to "think about how do you capitalize on these opportunities to fundamentally change American doctrine, and the shape of the world, in the wake of September 11th" (*Asia Times*, 30 March 2003).

To scratch the surface of the plethora of neocon pundits, professors and politicians reveals an amazing network of right-wing, union-busting, racist and pro-imperialist foundations, institutes and think tanks, directed and staffed by an interlocking cast of neocons, often related by family ties, and many of them stage-managed by Eleana Benador. In addition to Amir Taheri and the Zionist megaphone Michael Ledeen, Benador clients include blasts from the past like Cold Warrior Alexander Haig and former CIA chief James Woolsey (who is active in the inner circle of the Bush gang)—their very names evoke memories of U.S. imperialism's Murder, Inc. from Afghanistan to El Salvador.

Benador clients reach into the upper echelons and lower dungeons of today's White House and Pentagon as well. Richard Perle (known as the "Prince of Darkness" for his conspiratorial schemes) is with the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board (until recently its chairman) and a Benador client. Like most of this generation of neocons, he got his start as a protégé of the late Democratic senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, a staunchly pro-Zionist politician so embedded with weapons contractors he was known as "the senator from Boeing." So, too, is Richard Perle who has been a lobbyist for and employee of Israeli weapons manufacturers. Perle is with the American Enterprise Institute, which pushes the Likud's "greater Israel" plan to redefine the Near East, yet does not want the U.S. to lose sight of "the ultimate enemy," China.

Richard Perle and Douglas Feith (the third-ranking civilian at the Pentagon and also a lawyer with a Washington firm representing Israeli munitions suppliers) co-authored a position paper in 1996 titled "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm" for incoming Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This paper looks remarkably like the policies the neocons advocated for the Bush administration: topple Saddam Hussein, break the Oslo accords and restore martial law in the Palestinian territories. Perle and Feith are closely linked with Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz whose worldview is summed up as: "a kiloton of prevention is worth a megaton of cure" (*Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, April 2003).

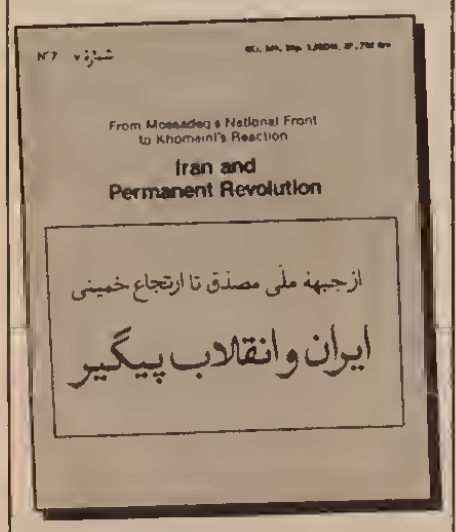
Conveniently located on the fifth floor of the American Enterprise Institute in Washington is the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), another neocon initiative. In addition to Perle and Feith, PNAC associates include William Kristol (editor of the neocon *Weekly Standard*, son of Irving Kristol, the "granddaddy" of the neocons), Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Elliott Abrams, Middle East Affairs director of the National Security Council. According to Kathleen and Bill Christison, former CIA political analysts, Abrams, "this Iran-contra criminal has already been working since mid-2001, badly miscast as the director for, of all things, democracy and human rights" on the NSC (*CounterPunch*, 13 December 2002). Imagine Hannibal Lecter as National Director of the school lunch program in America and you get a measure of what it means to associate Elliott Abrams with anything "human."

Plotting Armageddon is literally a family affair for Mr. Abrams. He is the son-in-law of Norman Podhoretz, the other granddaddy of the neocons, a veteran anti-Soviet nuclear first striker from the old "Committee on the Present Danger" who is also with PNAC. Norman Podhoretz and his neocon wife Midge Decter begat John Podhoretz who writes for the Moonies' *Washington Times* and the *New York Post*. Daniel Pipes is the son of Richard Pipes, the fanatically anti-Communist Harvard historian and falsifier of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Zionists and their Anti-Semitic Christian Bedfellows

A fascinating article by Akiva Eldar titled "Perles of Wisdom for the Faithful" was published to too little notice in the

In Farsi



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Australia...

(continued from page 5)

designed in the first instance to ridicule and stymie any future Aboriginal land rights claims.

The political climate over the Aboriginal question has shifted to the right. The ruling-class ideological offensive comes on top of their hoax of "reconciliation," the notion, pushed especially by the ALP, that Aborigines should forgive and forget, resigning themselves to an existence of racist oppression while the ruling class absolves itself of its crimes (see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 171, Winter 2000). Now seizing on the criminal World Trade Center attack and Bali bombing to whip up national chauvinism, bourgeois ideologues increasingly glorify Australian capitalism's "triumph" at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

This campaign is part of the government's efforts to whip up White Australian "national pride." Such patriotic jingoism serves to prepare attacks against the multiracial working class at home while ideologically girding the population to support predatory military expeditions abroad. Today as George Bush rides roughshod over the world, the Australian imperialist military are part of the bloody U.S.-led occupation of Iraq and head up colonial interventions themselves in East Timor and the Solomon Islands. And in doing so they dish out to the peoples of East Timor and their other Pacific neocolonies like Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Fiji the same hideous oppression meted out to Aboriginal peoples at home.

What is desperately necessary is a fight within the workers movement to combine class-struggle opposition to union-busting attacks with the struggle against racist oppression at home and imperialist marauding abroad. We say: Smash the union-busting attacks on the CFMEU! U.S./Australia out of Iraq! Australian troops/cops out of East Timor, PNG and the Solomon Islands! Asylum rights for refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights! What is needed is the building of a Leninist party that can direct the many streams of opposition to capitalist injustice into a mighty force for socialist revolution that will sweep away racist bourgeois rule. We of the SL, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), fight for a communist world in which the diversity of human cultures will not be an excuse for contempt and violence, but a source of enrichment.■

Israeli paper *Ha'aretz* on 1 October 2002. Eldar wrote:

> "A few weeks ago, Richard Perle invited the Pentagon chiefs to a meeting with researchers from a Washington think tank with particularly close relations with the Defense Department. According to information that reached a former top official in the Israeli security services, the researchers showed two slides to the Pentagon officials. The first was a depiction of the three goals in the war on terror and the democratization of the Middle East: Iraq—a tactical goal, Saudi Arabia—a strategic goal, and Egypt—the great prize.
>
> "The triangle in the next slide was no less interesting: Palestine is Israel, Jordan is Palestine, and Iraq is the Hashemite Kingdom."

Eldar's article also reveals much more about Perle and Feith's 1996 "Clean Break" position paper for Netanyahu. Eldar writes that "the position paper, which includes sections marked like crib sheets with TEXT for Netanyahu to use in his speeches, proposes some tactical methods the Israeli prime minister can use to foresee U.S. reactions and how to manage them. They give Netanyahu tips on how to maneuver congressmen, for example." Eldar observes that Perle and Feith "are walking a fine line between their loyalty to American governments" and "Israeli interests."

A generation ago, when Gore Vidal noted likewise about the bigot Norman Podhoretz who spit on the Civil War against black chattel slavery, which is the central event in American history, Vidal was besieged as an "anti-Semite" by the Podhoretz crowd. Gore Vidal fired back: "Although there is nothing wrong with being a lobbyist for a foreign power, one is supposed to register with the Justice Department" (*Nation*, 22 March 1986). We added:

> "Podhoretz has been able to maintain his loyalty to both states because of a fanatical anti-communism as holy to him as Islam to the Ayatollah. But the imperialists' strategic anti-Soviet consensus does not, much to Reagan's chagrin, liquidate differences in national interest. Despite Israel's complete reliance on American support, the Pollard affair yet again demonstrates that Israel is not simply a pup-pet of the U.S. The Zionist rulers know that their 'goyishe' senior partner in Washington and the rest of the world are anti-Semites who couldn't give a rat's ass for a 'Jewish homeland.' Has Podhoretz forgotten that the viciously anti-Semitic Nixon didn't trust Henry Kissinger, whom he called 'Jew-boy,' to deal with Near East affairs for years?"
>
> —"Gore Vidal: Bad Boy of the Bourgeoisie," *Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 40, Summer 1987

Former neocon Michael Lind, who broke with the fold because he couldn't stomach their overture to Southern Christian fundamentalism, observes in the *Nation* (23 February), "As the enormity of the [Iraq] debacle became apparent, neoconservatives abruptly began avowing their own nonexistence. Not since Stalin ordered the US Communist Party to go underground has an American political faction pretended to dissolve itself in public like this."

He concludes his piece, "A Tragedy of Errors," noting, "There is no neocon network of scheming masterminds—only a network of scheming blunderers. As a result of their own amateurism and incompetence, the neoconservatives have humiliated themselves. If they now claim that they never existed—well, you can hardly blame them, can you?" Indeed, Wolfowitz—who dismissed reporters' questions regarding the lack of any evidence to support his claims that Saddam Hussein had such weapons with, "It's like the judge said about pornography. I can't define it, but I will know it when I see it"—appears to be caught with a "wardrobe malfunction," i.e., pants down.

Delusions of Empire

British novelist Martin Amis argues that god as foreign policy adviser is logical for an intellectually null born-again American president. Amis "jokes" that Bush's particular vision of a far-flung American empire must seem downright homey. "We hear about the successful 'Texanization' of the Republican party. And doesn't Texas seem to resemble a country like Saudi Arabia, with its great heat, its oil wealth, its brimming houses of worship, and its weekly executions" (cited in *Asia Times*, 30 March 2003).

John Foster Dulles crafted U.S. imperialist policy in the postwar years to cultivate and nurture Islam as a bulwark against Communism. In 1950 he said, "The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us, and our task is to find it and develop it" (cited in Paul A. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* [1957]).

From Iran to Afghanistan, Spartacist League's proud record of opposition to imperialism and Islamic reaction speaks for itself.

From massive support to the Afghan *mujahedin*, to running guns to the ayatollahs in Iran-Contragate, to promoting religious reaction as a battering ram for capitalist counterrevolution, this has been the policy of U.S. imperialism. Then, on September 11, like Frankenstein's monster, the woman-hating religious hutchers the U.S. rulers created turned on their makers with the criminal attack on the World Trade Center. This was seized upon by the Bush gang, which is now tangled in its own web of deceit, and so hogged down in Iraq that it doesn't even know where it's going.

So, like Sharon, the U.S. is "creating facts on the ground." Ariel Sharon and the neocons dream of creating an American Empire and a "greater Israel" through "regime change" across the belt extending from Turkey to China, through the heart of the Near East and Arabian Peninsula. Syria is repeatedly threatened and now squeezed between Israel and American-occupied Iraq, and Iran is a huge "domino" on their hit list.

This brings us back to Mr. Amir Taheri and the role of slander in politics. Taheri does not even believe his own lie that Marxists and Islamic fundamentalists are allies. He wrote previously, "The traditional anti-American sentiments that provide the subtext of political culture in certain sections of society in Western Europe and Latin America are mostly left leaning and thus equally hostile to radical Islam" ("Iran and Saudi Arabia, Two Zealots of Islamism," *African Geopolitics* No. 5, Winter 2002). Yet since at least the huge worldwide demonstrations against the U.S. war on Iraq last February, Taheri has screeched about "Marxist-Islamist terror groups."

Life is a living hell today for the Iraqi people, suffering under a U.S. military occupation which won't even restore essential public services like potable water and electric power to a country it destroyed with a display of high-tech weaponry intended to terrorize the entire planet. Taheri's spin on this monstrous crime? In an article headlined, "'Chaos' Is Progress," he says, "Iraq is beginning to become a normal society" (*New York Post*, 2 February). This gives you a taste of what kind of "democracy" Taheri wants to bring to Iran. The Iranian women, the Kurds and other oppressed minorities, the left and workers movement who were butchered by the thousands under the bloody Shah, and by more thousands under Khomeini, will not welcome a U.S.-installed monarchy hack with open arms any more than the Iraqi people "welcome" the terrible destruction and brutal U.S. military occupation of their country. And it is in the interests of the Iranian masses as well that we expose Amir Taheri and his neocon cabal.■

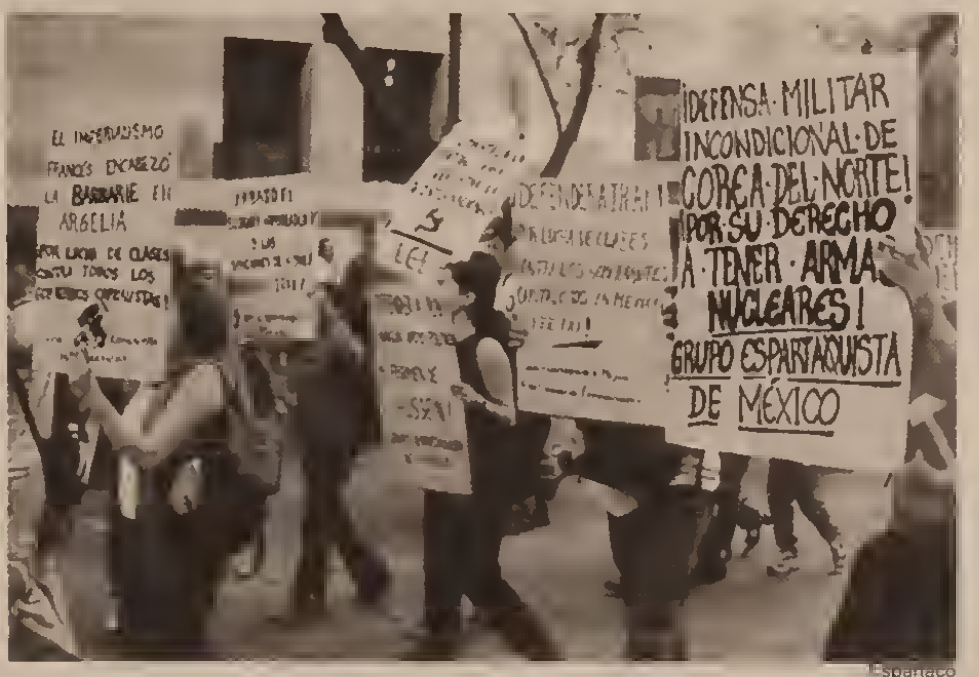
Mexico...

(continued from page 7)

PRD in these countries to cozy up to.

We have noted in repeated polemics that, especially in the context of the PAN's anti-labor offensive (and also the PRD's in Mexico City), these positions are objectively anti-union and strike-breaking, an accusation any leftist must take very seriously. How does the IG answer all this? Well, they don't.

Faithful to themselves in spite of everything, in their last article on Mexico ("Mexico: Fox Government A 'Hinge' for War on Iraq," *The Internationalist* No. 15, January-February 2003), the Internationalist Group resorts to a clumsy balancing act to avoid giving a clear answer to the questions posed by reality. In the article they devote an entire section to talking bombastically about the strategic importance of Mexican oil, but they notoriously omit any mention of the fact that the leaders of the oil workers union are currently under a judicial attack by the bourgeois state (see "Estado Burgués: ¡Manos fuera del STPRM!", *Espartaco* No. 18). The IG talks idyllically about an oil workers strike that "would strike a strong blow against Washington's war plans," but they avoid mention of the fact that the union had called for a strike months before the IG published its innocuous article, mobilizing tens of thousands of workers to demand a wage increase. In a mobilization in Mexico City, workers chanted: "Wage increase, union autonomy!" The strike call by the oil union made the Mexican bourgeoisie tremble with fear and considerably worried the imperialists, who did not hesitate to give their support to Fox's anti-union attacks. Conscious of the enormous social power that could escape its control, the PRI bureaucracy ended up agreeing to a meager raise and demobilizing the rank and file. But the IG simply declared all these facts "nonexistent" because these show the stupidity and the strikebreaking nature of their line.



Mexico City, February 2003: GEM comrades march in demonstration against U.S. attack on Iraq.

Now, it seems the IG is ashamed of its own posture (and, frankly, who wouldn't be?). Thus, the IG's article not only sins by omission; it actively seeks to disorient its readers on the contents of its own politics. Like vampires, centrists hate the light of day. Speaking of Mexican dock workers and the need for them to carry out acts of international workers solidarity, the IG says:

> "But in order to carry out [acts of workers solidarity], it is indispensable to wage a fight to forge a class-struggle union leadership against the corporatist *charros* (government-imposed bureaucrats) of the CT/CTM/CROC/CROM, and the pro-PRD 'democratic' union bureaucrats."

This was written to deliberately confuse their readers, implying the IG has a position it does not have. Let's not forget that this organization maintains that the corporatist CTM unions represent "the class enemy," and that they have furiously denounced us for saying there is no class difference between corporatist and "independent" unions. But now, as ambiguously implied in the new IG piece, it's not about forging a new organization, but only a new leadership, *just like* in the PRD-led unions. Does the IG want to give this supposed "class enemy" a "class-struggle leadership"?

Can it be that, confronted by the reality of class struggle, the shamefaced IG is covertly changing the direction of its politics? It's unlikely, because these charlatans have shown all too well that they don't care about the reality of class struggle, and that they don't have any shame either. So this can only be a dimwitted, confusionist maneuver aimed at avoiding the lamentable conclusions of their own politics and to continue playing hide-and-seek with our polemics.

In general, the dominant ideology in any given society is the ideology of the economically dominant class. Inside the workers movement this is expressed in all these leadership "alternatives" which, in different ways, only seek to keep the workers movement within the confines of bourgeois ideology. It is necessary to build a Leninist vanguard party, fusing radicalized intellectuals committed to the cause of the proletariat with the best elements among the working class on the basis of a revolutionary program; a party armed with the experience of decades of workers struggles internationally, codified in the program of Marxism; a party which denounces every variant of bourgeois ideology inside the workers movement, whether open or covert; a party capable of leading the working class to its emancipation, and therefore to the emancipation of society as a whole.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Government Backs Down, For Now

Sinister Witchhunt of Antiwar Activists

An ominous attempt to resurrect the police spying and state terror of the McCarthyite years was spiked recently in Iowa due to widespread publicity and outcry. Earlier this month, federal prosecutors in Des Moines went after participants at an antiwar conference, demanding all records around the conference and the names of everybody who attended. A sheriff's deputy who works on the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force was sent to serve subpoenas on four antiwar activists —from the Catholic Peace Ministry, the Catholic Workers House, the Iowa Peace Network, and a protester who had visited Iraq in 2002—demanding they appear before a secret grand jury, while refusing to say what the jury was investigating.

Protesters believe that the Feds targeted the conference, which was held on November 15 under the title "Stop the Occupation! Bring the Iowa Guard Home!", in part because of protests the next day at Iowa National Guard Headquarters, where 12 people were arrested. One of them was a Grinnell College librarian who went limp when arrested; she is now being charged with a "misdemeanor assault on a peace officer."

Subpoenas were also issued to Drake University, ordering it to turn over all information on the campus antiwar conference and on the National Lawyers Guild chapter that sponsored it. The Drake subpoena demanded "all documents indicating the purpose and intended participants in the meeting, and all documents or recordings which would identify persons that actually attended the meeting." An organization of liberal and leftist lawyers formed in 1937, the National Lawyers Guild was among those designated a "subversive organization" in the McCarthy years and has been a perpetual target of government witchhunters ever since. A federal court judge also issued a gag order forbidding the University to discuss the matter.

AP

February 10: Drake University law professor Sally Frank protests federal subpoenas, gag order outside U.S. courthouse in Des Moines, Iowa.

This attack on antiwar activists comes in the context of the phony "war on terror," a pretext to shred the civil liberties of the population as a whole. The Justice Department wants to unleash the FBI and cops to spy on all perceived opponents. As the "Homeland Security" office said in May 2003, local police should keep tabs on anyone who has "expressed dislike of attitudes and decisions of the U.S. government." The USA-Patriot Act and other repressive measures give the government's secret police expanded authority to tap your phones, search your home, scour your financial records, interrogate your librarian and place you under arrest without probable cause a crime has been committed. On top of this the government has proposed Patriot II, which would strip citizenship from those who get in the way of Washington's imperial designs. Last fall the government announced its use of a centralized "terror watch list" of over 100,000 persons, a throwback to the McCarthyite Communist Index and Security Index which designated nearly 30,000 leftists to be rounded up and placed in detention camps during a "national emergency." During protests against the Iraq war, the government used a "no-fly list" to prevent activists from attending demonstrations.

The government wants to extend its reach into even the most intimate aspects of life. A 14 February *New York Times* editorial, "Privacy in Peril," stated that the Justice Department has subpoenaed hospitals across the country, demanding hundreds of medical records of women who had late-term abortions, in the name of defending its invasive "Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003" in court. This sinister assault targets both women and their doctors, exposing them to everything from legal harassment to murder by the anti-abortion terrorists.

Following a 7 February Associated Press report on the Drake University case and a barrage of nationwide criticism, on February 10 federal authorities backtracked, withdrawing all the subpoenas and lifting the gag order. Drake University law professor Sally Frank, the local contact for the National Lawyers Guild, said at a rally that afternoon at the Des Moines federal building: "What we've had here for the last week in Des Moines is an intense effort to stifle dissent." Even as the antiwar activists announced the Feds' withdrawal, two police detectives were videotaping the rally from a hotel room across the street. As Brian Terrell of the Catholic Peace Ministry pointed out, "The civil liberties of everyone in this country are in danger."

The bloody U.S. government, colonial occupiers of Iraq, would like to obliterate all opposition to its sway, abroad and at home. And as the government tries to cloak its own operations in secrecy, it increasingly pries into the private lives of everyone. But what this capitalist state would like to do and what it can get away with are two different things. What's necessary is to mobilize the power of labor in struggle against the government's assaults on democratic rights.■

Patrick Demarchelier

The Nipple That Shook the Moral Foundation of a Nation

What H. L. Mencken called the "American hoob-oisie" is in full frenzy following the Super Bowl, all because the kids, sitting around family TV sets in the bosom of their overfed, drunken nuclear families, finally got to see something interesting on network TV. The brief flash of black pop star Janet Jackson's silver shield-bedecked nipple, as she concluded her duet with Justin Timberlake on "Rock Your Body," undoubtedly did more for the heavily sedated male audience than all those expensive ads for Viagra-type sex drugs on the most-hyped, most-watched show on American television.

So corporate sponsors must be fuming as "family values" reactionaries scream. Over 200,000 complaints poured in, lawsuits are threatened, and FCC (Federal Communications Commission) chairman Michael (son of Colin) Powell announced a federal probe of the entire MTV-produced half-time show, intoning, "The whole performance was onstage copulation." Well, yeah; it's called pop music.

But there's a dirty racist angle to all this. After all, ABC's prime-time *NYPD Blue* show has been a gross-out for years, with its nasty white cop butt shots, with no repercussions. Let a gorgeous black entertainer pop out of her bustier, though, and it's a different story: fury and demands for apologies (with which a chastised Justin, who appeared on the Grammys sporting a boring brown suit to match his nose, promptly obliged). Meanwhile, Janet's brother Michael Jackson has been the target of a government-sponsored anti-sex witchhunt for years because he's a world-famous black star known for challenging sexual and racial identities (see "Stop Vendetta Against Michael Jackson!" *WV* No. 818, 23 January). Then there was the infamous "child pornography" vendetta against black R&B singer R. Kelly a few years ago. We defend both Michael Jackson and R. Kelly against the vindictive, bogus charges against them.

To be black in racist America means somebody is always gunning for you, no matter how rich, how famous, how successful you may be. Throw a little innocent fun and sex into the mix in this hypocritical, puritanical, brutal society, and an explosion is practically guaranteed. Today, we have an attorney general who insisted on covering up the bared breast of a statue representing "justice" in the stately halls of Washington, D.C., while working overtime to repress the rights of the entire American population. Well, we're actually for the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," as the Declaration of Independence puts it, and if Janet Jackson wants to model for a new statue dedicated to those rights, we're all for it. Long may she wave.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 821 5 March 2004

Asylum for Haitian Refugees—Stop the Deportations!

Haiti: U.S./UN Troops Out!

MARCH 2—As we go to press, Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide has been whisked out of Haiti to the Central African Republic under U.S. military escort. U.S. Marines invaded to restore "law and order"—i.e., to repress the desperately poor Haitian masses—and a multinational "peacekeeping" force, spearheaded by the French, is in the works under the aegis of the United Nations. Haiti suffered a brutal U.S. military occupation for 19 years, from 1915-1934. The U.S. left only after it had trained a new *gendarmerie*, the killer National Guard. Propped up by the U.S., Haitian dictators "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son "Baby Doc" killed an estimated 50,000 Haitians. The armed rebels rushing to rule Haiti today are bloodthirsty killers with ties to CIA-trained death squads and the hated Tontons Macoutes. We demand: *All U.S./UN imperialist troops out of Haiti now!*

Aristide claims that he was kidnapped by U.S. forces. The crazed neocons in the Bush administration who trained the death squad leaders returning to power in Haiti today no doubt considered the liberation theologist, Aristide, some kind of "communist." Aristide rode a wave of popular support to power in 1990-91 and was toppled by U.S.-trained assassins and Duvalierists. He was then returned to power by a U.S. invasion force of 20,000 in 1994, only now to be removed from power by the U.S. in 2004. Aristide, as well as the butchers who preceded and have succeeded him, are puppets of Wall Street, Washington, Paris, the IMF and World Bank.

For weeks, Haiti has been wracked

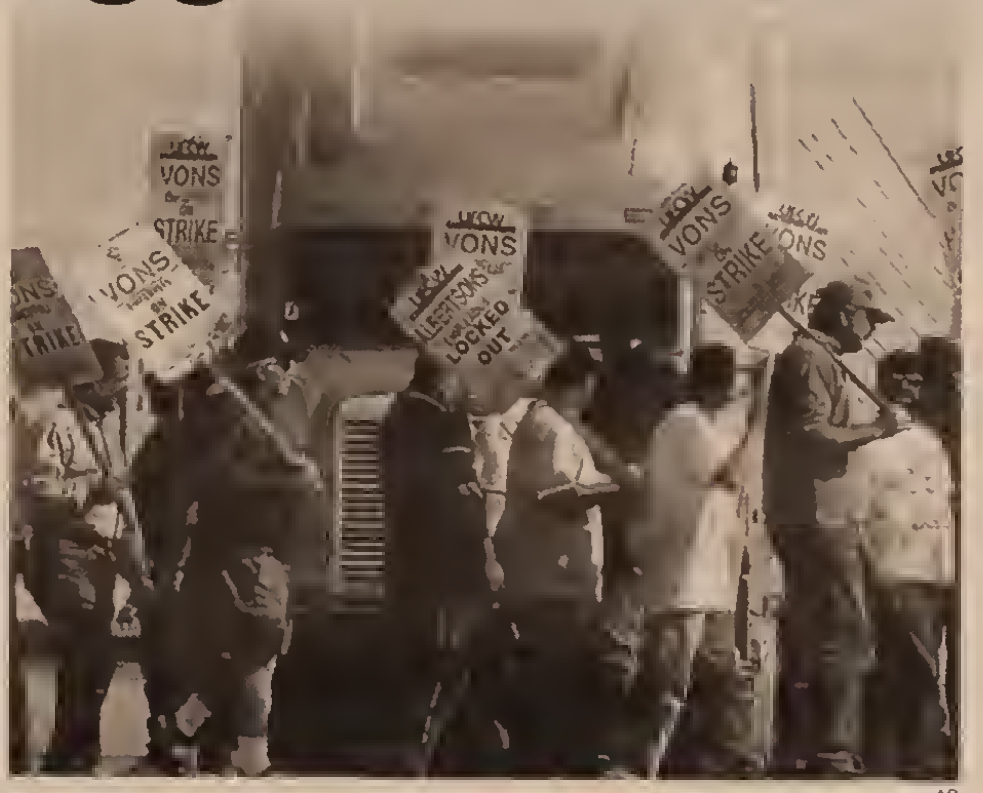
continued on page 11

Labor Tops Sell Out Militant Supermarket Workers

UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America

LOS ANGELES, March 2—After a five-month-long bitter struggle against the supermarket bosses (Vons/Safeway, Albertsons and Ralphs/Kroger), nearly 60,000 strikers in the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) are returning to work with a new contract containing deep concessions. The new contract introduces a two-tier system of wages and benefits, a pernicious scheme to divide union members by pitting them against each other while setting up the existing workforce for victimization by management. One striker expressed a common worry among the majority of grocery workers who are not guaranteed full-time work: "We're going to start losing hours [to lower-paid new hires]." The *Los Angeles Times* (27 February) predicts, "new, lower-paid hires could be in the majority within a few years."

Workers hired under the new contract will receive lower wages and will have to pay for health care benefits. Those employed before this new contract may face a $5 to $15 per week payment in the third year of the contract. And co-payment will now be required of all workers for medical services. Moreover, "first tier" workers will be knocked down to "second tier" status if they transfer from one department to another, such as if a deli worker becomes a cashier. Additionally, wages are frozen for the duration of the new three-year contract, with workers getting only two paltry lump-sum payments. Workers are also outraged by the requirement that they each submit a grossly insulting "Request to Return to Work" form. Although scabs cannot be retained



AP

UFCW strikers picket El Monte distribution center, November 2003.

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

in place of striking workers, the implication behind this is the threat of layoffs. To add insult to injury, the supermarket chains are blaming the strike for "poor-performing locations" that may get closed down, resulting in potentially thousands being laid off.

The responsibility for this defeat lies squarely at the feet of the trade-union bureaucracy. The workers fought like hell, including several times defying the treachery of the bureaucrats. But as we wrote in "UFCW Strike: A Battle for All Labor" (*WV* No. 819, 6 February): "What is most importantly posed for the UFCW to succeed in its struggle against the supermarket bosses is the national extension of the strike." As a UFCW member at the Pasadena strike vote told *Workers Vanguard*, "It's like you said, we should have shut everything down and made it a national strike."

But with tens of thousands of UFCW members working under extended contracts that already expired and with the contracts of more than 280,000 grocery workers in eleven states expiring in coming months, the labor tops did everything in their power to isolate the Southern California workers by refusing to spread the strike. In Arizona, some 15,000 UFCW members were kept on the job by the bureaucracy under an indefinite contract extension. In Southern California, the 5,700 UFCW workers at 101 Food 4 Less stores (a Kroger subsidiary) should have been out from the beginning. Instead, even though their contract was set to expire February 28 and their health care benefits are determined by the master contract of the UFCW workers on strike, the union tops kept Food 4 Less workers on the job, extending their contract to April 4.

Faced with a long, drawn-out battle and a leadership opposed to doing what's needed to win, most UFCW members voted for the contract with bitter resignation. As one worker put it, "We're tired and broke." Nonetheless, some 14 percent voted no. It is beyond grotesque that having shafted the workers, the president of the UFCW International, Doug Dority, has the audacity to claim that this was "one of the most successful strikes in history." The reality was captured by a striker who explained, "Just when we're starting to hurt them, the union caves."

Despite the betrayals of their leadership, UFCW members can be proud that they stood their ground and remained unified on the picket lines, defiant and unbroken in the face of the grocery bosses' concerted attacks. The UFCW strike was a powerful display of the social power of the working class and it could have gone the other way. The strike was bolstered by a massive outpouring of labor support from other unions that raised money for the UFCW strike fund and joined in strike support rallies; on November 10, the ILWU longshore union shut down L.A.-area ports for eight hours

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Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Free Anarchist Sherman Austin!

The Partisan Defense Committee has begun sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoner Sherman Austin, a 20-year-old black anarchist from Los Angeles who was railroaded to a year in prison and three years probation for a thought crime, pure and simple. Austin joins 16 other fighters for the rights of the oppressed in our stipend program, among them death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, coal miner Jerry Dale Lowe and members of the Philadelphia MOVE organization.

The McCarthyite witchhunt of Sherman Austin is an object lesson in how the capitalist rulers, Republicans and Democrats alike, use their "anti-terror" laws to target outspoken opponents of imperialist war, racist oppression, capitalist immiseration and anyone else they don't like. Austin went to prison last September on the felony charge of "distributing explosives information with the intent that it be used in furtherance of a violent federal crime." His conviction was based on a law originally sponsored by California Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein in 1997. The "evidence" against him was that his anarchist Web site (www.raisethefist.com), which hosted postings from others, included a posting called "The Reclaim Guide," which offered instructions on how to make simple, small incendiary devices. Austin had nothing to do with authoring the piece; it was the creation of a suburban youth from a well-heeled conservative family who was not prosecuted. Such information can be found all over the Web, from Amazon.com to neo-Nazi sites.

Austin wanted to fight the charges and expose the political frame-up at trial. But he was subjected to over two years of state harassment and faced additional "terrorist enhancement" sentencing guidelines, expanded under Clinton's 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and the 2001 USA-Patriot Act, which could have meant up to 20 years in prison if he went to trial. Austin reluctantly accepted a guilty plea when the Feds initially offered a deal of one month in jail.

But when Austin appeared in court in September 2002, the deal was rejected by Judge Stephen Wilson, a Reagan appointee, as too lenient. Wilson railed at the prosecutor: "What kind of message is a disposition like this" sending? When the prosecutor answered, "The message here is that Mr. Austin is certainly not a terrorist," Wilson shot back, "Why are you setting the bar so high?", revealing the breadth of the government's "anti-terror" web.

In June 2003, Wilson rejected a second plea deal of four months in jail and three years probation, directing the prosecutor to consult with his bosses at the Justice Department and FBI director Robert Mueller. Wilson complained, "You think giving this sentence...is supposed to be a deterrence to some other revolutionary who wants to change the world." When Austin returned to court in August, the prosecution still recommended four months, but Wilson instead imposed the sentence of one year in prison and three years probation—during which Austin will not be allowed to use a computer without approval of a probation officer and will be subjected to searches and seizures of his computers.

The case of Sherman Austin illustrates how the Democrats have marched in lockstep with the White House in shredding democratic rights. Following Austin's sentencing, Senator Feinstein wrote Ashcroft, "I was pleased to learn recently that Sherman Austin was sentenced," but complained, "it is dismaying that there has only been one conviction" under her "anti-terror" law.

From an early age, Sherman Austin has been an active supporter of the struggles of workers and the oppressed, joining Lahor Day celebrations, protests against the imperialist slaughter in Iraq and rallies in support of the ILWU longshore union during the contract battles and union-busting lockout in 2002. The government's vendetta began on May Day 2001 when he and 95 other youthful demonstrators were arrested at gunpoint during a cop riot against an anarchist "Carnival Against Capitalism" march in Long Beach, California.

On 24 January 2002, Austin's home, where he lived with his mother and sister, was invaded by the L.A. Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI, the Secret Service, the LAPD and L.A. sheriffs. The heavily-armed cops had a 29-page search warrant citing Austin's Web site, which contained "anti-government... anti-capitalism, and militant messages that promoted communism." The warrant also contained information detailing Austin's participation in demonstrations dating back to when he was 14 years old. The cops and Feds interrogated Austin about his friends and his politics for over six hours, ransacked his room and confiscated his political literature.

In February 2002, Austin was singled out for arrest by the Feds after attending a protest against the World Economic Forum in New York City. After more than two weeks of detention and interrogation in New York and Oklahoma jails, he was released and all charges dropped due to lack of evidence. Seven months later, despite admitting that they had found nothing on the computers seized in the raid, federal prosecutors told Austin's attorneys that they didn't want to "let him off the hook." So, they charged him under Feinstein's law. Having no evidence that Austin had "knowledge" or "intent" that the information in the "Guide" would be used for a "violent federal crime," as required by the law, the government made its case by citing Austin's criticism of U.S. government policies, cop brutality and racism.

Fatal Error

Sherman Austin

The vicious persecution of Austin is part and parcel of the phony "war on terror," a war on civil liberties carried out by the Democrats as well as the reactionary Bush gang. On February 22 Bush's secretary of education Rod Paige likened the National Education Association teachers union to a "terrorist organization." This underlines what the "war on terror" is all about: it is a political construct, a political crusade providing the pretext for the government to increase its repressive powers and to restrict the democratic rights of the population. Labor and all defenders of democratic rights have a critical stake in making Austin's fight their own. ***Free Sherman Austin now!***

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. We urge all *Workers Vanguard* readers to contribute to our stipends program—a vital act of solidarity. Earmarked contributions can be sent to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099.

If you wish to correspond with Austin, you can write to: Sherman Austin, #51565-054, FCI Tucson, 8901 South Wilmont Road, Tucson, AZ 85706.■

TROTSKY

For a Class-Struggle Leadership in the Unions!

LENIN

Despite waging a militant fight against the supermarket bosses, the UFCW strikers were sold out by the trade-union tops through their allegiance to the capitalist system and its politicians, particularly the Democrats. In a speech given over 100 years ago, American socialist leader Daniel De Leon, who aptly called the trade-union bureaucracy the "labor lieutenants of capital," described the role of the labor bureaucracy in the workers movement.

The profits of the capitalist class represent unpaid labor of the working class. The fleecing of labor implied in the raking in of profits is based upon the existence of a wage-slave class, a working class, in short, a proletariat; and the continuance of the existence of such a class is in turn dependent upon the private ownership of the means of production—of the land on and the machinery and capital with which to work. Given the private ownership of these combined elements of production, the capitalist class will congest ever more into its own hands the wealth of the land, while the working class must sink to ever deeper depths of poverty and dependence, every mechanical improvement only giving fresh impetus to the exaltation of the capitalist and to the degradation of the workingman. The issue between the two classes is one of life and death; there are no two sides to it; there is no compromise possible. Obviously, it is in the interest of the working class that the issue be made and kept clear before the eyes of the rank and file, and that capitalism be held up to their view in all its revolting hideousness....

Obviously, it is in the interest of the working class to arouse it to class-conscious political action. What does the labor leader do? From England, westward over the United States and Canada to Australia, we find the labor leaders solidly arrayed against the very idea. A veritable bulwark of capitalism, they seek to turn the political trend of the labor movement into the channels of capitalist politics, where the head of labor's lance, its independent, class-conscious political effort, can be safely broken off.

—Daniel De Leon, "Two Pages from Roman History: Plebs Leaders and Labor Leaders" (April 1902)

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce Andlé, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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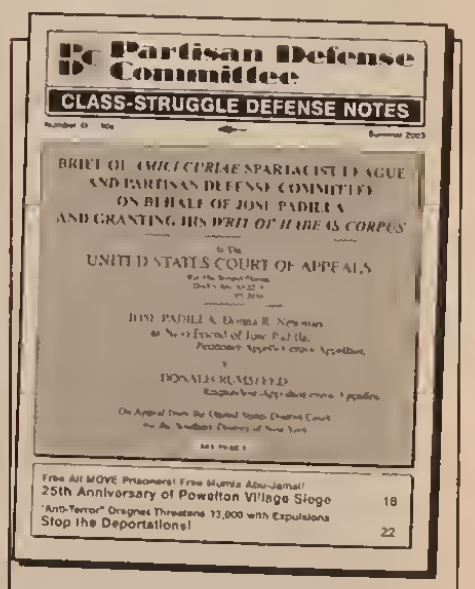

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1954-62

The Algerian War—

How French Imperialism Was Defeated

Gillo Pontecorvo's 1965 classic, The Battle of Algiers, *has recently been re-released in American theaters. Originally released during the Vietnam War, global anti-colonial revolts, and the ghetto explosions against racial oppression in America, the film was a must-see for leftists, Black Panthers and fighters for social justice. Curiously, as U.S. imperialism switched from the "shock and awe" aerial bombardment of Iraq to the brutal military occupation of Baghdad and other key cities, the Pentagon organized a private screening of* The Battle of Algiers, *to learn from the bloody French colonial experience in Algeria.*

Pontecorvo's film movingly depicts the utter inhumanity of the French colonial forces as they inflicted a devastating defeat on the Algerian independence fighters in the 1957 Battle of Algiers. The film then fast-forwards several years to the mass upsurges that heralded the victory of the Algerian people over French colonial rule. Unanswered by the film is the question: how, in the face of such overwhelming military might, was the Algerian national liberation movement able to prevail?

We reprint below an article by WV *Editorial Board member Bruce André which outlines an answer to that question. Comrade André's document was originally written as a contribution to an internal discussion in our party and was published by our French comrades in* Le Bolchévik *No. 152 (Spring 2000). This document debunks the imperialist myth that the Algerian War was a "stalemate" with no victors.*

* * *

The idea that France was not defeated in the Algerian War is the almost universally accepted "received wisdom" in France, including by much of the left. Virtually every academic history of the Algerian War explicitly states that French forces won "militarily" and that de Gaulle then "granted" independence to Algeria. Likewise, the Pabloites [the followers of the pseudo-Trotskyist Michel Pahlo, whose revisionism destroyed the Fourth International by the early 1950s and is represented today by the United Secretariat (USec)] wrote at the time that the war "is ending with a 'compromise peace' that reflects the relationship of forces on the military terrain" (*Quatrième Internationale*, April 1962). This document summarizes the results of research I did in tracing the origins of that myth and the lies and distortions used by the bourgeoisie and its ideologues to further it.

Henissart

December 1960: Mass demonstrations under outlawed FLN flag, here in Algiers, shattered French illusion that Algerian people would accept continued colonial rule.

The origin of the myth is easy to pinpoint, since it comes straight from Charles de Gaulle himself. The general had already been crucial to the French bourgeoisie's myth that it had "resisted" Nazism when, in fact, it had actively rounded up French Jews to be sent to the gas chambers. Here is how de Gaulle wanted the history of Algerian independence to be told: "It is France, eternal France, who, alone in her strength, in the name of her principles and in accordance with her interests, granted it to the Algerians" (*Mémoires d'Espoir*, Vol. 1 [1970]).

This line has been repeated by virtually every comprehensive history of the Algerian War. The most widely read history of the war in France is journalist Yves Courrière's four-volume *La guerre d'Algérie*. Courrière states that French forces won a "military victory" over the FLN (National Liberation Front), which he describes in the later years of the war as "moribund" and "at the end of its rope." British historian Alistair Horne, in the main English-language history of the Algerian War, writes that the FLN leadership refused to "recognise military defeat and the advantages of sensible compromise" (*A Savage War of Peace* [1977]).

The Pabloites also embraced the myth that the FLN failed to achieve a "military victory." Their French group wrote of the accords by which France recognized Algerian independence: "The Evian accords are...a ***compromise*** corresponding to the relation of forces and not a total overall victory of the Algerian revolution over French imperialism" (*La Vérité des Travailleurs*, April 1962). When an Algerian Pabloite group was set up in the mid 1970s, its first publication was a pamphlet retailing the bourgeoisie's myths—and adding some of their own. They claimed that, during the Algerian War, there was a "total military failure of the FLN" (*La crise du capitalisme d'Etat et du bonapartisme en Algérie* [April 1978]) and that the Evian accords went so far in guaranteeing "imperialist interests in Algeria" that "the state structures bequeathed by colonialism were not modified in the slightest"! In its entire 62 pages, this pamphlet never hinted that, at the time, the Pabloites, politically capitulating before the Algerian nationalists, had characterized Ben Bella's regime as a "workers and peasants government" and USec leader Michel Pablo had been a member of his government.

Actually, the myth that there was a military "stalemate" and that France then withdrew voluntarily is accepted by many Algerians—a circumstance for which Algerian nationalists are largely responsible. Here is what Ferhat Abbas, a prominent bourgeois politician who became president of the FLN's Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA), wrote of the man who was, more than any other, responsible for the deaths of more than one million Algerians, the carrying out of torture on a mass scale, and the driving of two million people—one quarter of the country's population—into "regroupment centers" (concentration camps):

> "By turning his back on 'the spirit of empire,' by breaking the vicious circle of the colonial concept, General de Gaulle was able to impose a solution to a problem which seemed insoluble. His courage; his lucidity, his firm determination, overcame the many obstacles in his path. He recognized our demands and the heroism of our fighters. Thus, he brought an end to the Algerian War."
>
> —Ferhat Abbas, *Autopsie d'une guerre* (1980)

Even FLN supporters who do not revere de Gaulle are blinded by nationalism to the profound social crisis that accompanied the Algerian War. At the Museum of the Army in Algiers, the dominant theme is the overwhelming disparity in firepower between the FLN and the French colonial army. Counterposed to a piece of a downed French plane and an unexploded 700 kg bomb are the FLN's weapons—all light arms, including homemade mortars and grenades. Several displays represent the electrified fences that ran the length of the Tunisian and Moroccan borders, which prevented the FLN from bringing in artillery (which had been key to the 1954 Vietnamese victory at Dien Bien Phu). Large paintings on the wall depict isolated groups of guerrilla fighters being destroyed by French helicopters, tanks, armored cars and artillery. It is a moving testament to those who kept up the struggle under horrendous conditions. But presenting it in this way as a purely military face-off begs the question of how the FLN was able to achieve victory over French colonialism.

Precisely that question came up at a November 1984 historians' conference on the Algerian War sponsored by the Algerian government (see colloquium proceedings, *Le retentissement de la révolution algérienne* [Algiers, 1984]). There, British historian Michael Brett challenged the view that "by 1958 the French were winning, and by the end of 1959 they had effectively won," and that de Gaulle then "withdrew" from Algeria "because he had other ideas of national grandeur." Brett noted that "the sharp contrast" which historians have drawn "between military defeat and political victory for the F.L.N." seemed a "paradox," and he cautiously suggested that the explanation might be "dependent upon the course of events in France set in train by the war." No historian took up the challenge, and none has done so since.

As in most colonial wars, the Algerian people were victorious in large part because *their struggle provoked a deep social crisis in France and crushed the bourgeoisie's will to fight*. Yet that history is almost totally absent from the history books—and both the Stalinists of the French Communist Party (PCF) and the Algerian nationalists contribute to the cover-up.

French and Algerian Workers in the Algerian War

The first explosion of class struggle provoked by the war was a wave of mutinies by soldiers refusing to be sent to Algeria, often backed up by workers strikes. Starting in September 1955, less

continued on page 4

Harmony Books

Algiers, 1958: Charles de Gaulle greets General Salan, commander of French forces in Algeria, shortly after taking power.

Algeria...

(continued from page 3)

than one year after the FLN's first guerrilla attacks, and lasting until about June 1956, these protests hit dozens of French cities and towns, often involving hundreds of workers in running battles with the police.

One of the first, and largest, soldiers' revolts took place in Rouen. On 6 October 1955, 600 soldiers bivouacked at the Richepanse barracks in Petit-Quevilly rebelled as they were to be transported to Algeria. They threw out their officers, ransacked the barracks and barricaded the entrance. The next day, dockers, railway and other workers from neighboring factories, responding to leaflets distributed by PCF youth and CGT trade unionists, struck in support of the soldiers. When riot cops tried to overrun the barracks, several thousand workers surrounded them and showered them with bricks. The fighting continued late into the night. As scores of wounded cops were carried from the scene, 60 busloads of riot police from other cities had to be rushed in as reinforcements.

By the spring of 1956, one-day strikes against the war began to hit entire cities and regions, especially in mining areas, where Algerian workers were an important component of the workforce. On April 30, striking workers demonstrating against the war shut down the mining city of Firminy for 24 hours. On May 9, 9,000 miners throughout the Loire region struck for one day against the Algerian War and for higher wages. On May 20, Saint-Julien was shut down by a one-day strike against the war. And one week later, some 10,000 miners in the coal fields of Gard in southern France struck for 24 hours, also calling for a "cease-fire" in Algeria in addition to their wage demands.

no credit

French colonial troops stand over bodies of massacred Algerians.

J.-P. Marais

French workers and soldiers defy cops to stop troop transport train at Le Havre during Algerian War, 1956.

Almost the only book to even mention that unprecedented movement is the PCF's three-volume *La guerre d'Algérie* (1981), edited by former Algerian Communist Party leader Henri Alleg. But Alleg cites the protests only to argue that they had nothing more than "a symbolic value," were "of limited scope," "often lasted a very limited time," mobilized "often limited" forces, and were "all told, rather limited" in number. In reality, the Stalinist leaders did everything possible—as part of their support to the Socialist-led popular-front government, which was brutally escalating the war—to keep the soldier-worker revolts against their officers from becoming a conscious fight against the government, which could have opened up a revolutionary situation. The PCF's daily *L'Humanité* mainly limited itself to publishing a sort of box score on the inside pages containing a terse summary of the previous day's revolts. PCF members often learned of protests in neighboring towns only by being arrested and meeting comrades in jail.

With the working-class leaders either directly carrying out the war or supporting the government, the soldier-worker protests trailed off, but strikes over economic demands continued to skyrocket. By 1957, the number of strikes was greater than at any time since 1936, the year of the general strike (Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, *Strikes in France 1830-1968* [1974]). They included heavy participation by Algerian workers, who numbered almost half a million in France by the end of the war and represented a potential human bridge to class struggle in Algeria. Even a PCF newspaper admitted, "Algerian workers are among the most combative in the common struggles" (*L'Algérien en France*, October 1956).

Meanwhile, Algeria was being swept by an unprecedented wave of class struggle, especially by the powerful dockers, which several times shut down the country. (Except for some references by Alleg, this is virtually absent from all histories of the Algerian War—including those written by Algerian nationalists.) In December 1954, six weeks after the FLN's initial guerrilla attacks, dockers in Oran—including a strong minority of workers of European origin—refused to unload arms shipments for the French military. When the Oran dockers were locked out, Algiers dockers struck in solidarity. In June 1955, French police attacked a union meeting in Philippeville (today Skikda) and arrested three union leaders, provoking a national dockers strike that shut down every port in the country for several days. In July 1956, the FLN and the newly formed FLN-led UGTA trade-union federation called a one-day general strike to mark the anniversary of the 1830 French colonial intervention. Despite the terrorist bombing of UGTA headquarters and the arrest of the entire UGTA leadership, it was the biggest strike Algeria had ever seen, clearly demonstrating the social power of that country's proletariat, despite its relatively small size. Interestingly, this strike also mobilized a significant number of workers of European origin. Thousands of workers were fired for participating in the strike, including scores of Jewish and European-derived workers (*L'Algérien en France*, August 1956).

Powerful working-class struggle in Algeria continued throughout the fall of 1956. An August 10 strike by Algiers dockers against a terrorist bombing in the Casbah lasted for several days and grew into a general strike of the capital. On the 1 November 1956 anniversary of the start of the FLN uprising, a general strike called by the UGTA shut down much of the country (and was joined by Tunisian workers). Then in January 1957, the FLN initiated a catastrophic *one-week* general strike in an illusory (and vain) attempt to influence a scheduled United Nations debate on Algeria. Coming just after Socialist prime minister Guy Mollet had turned over full powers in Algeria to the French army (using the Special Powers Act, which had been passed with PCF support), the strike was brutally smashed. In the months-long wave of terror that followed, known as the Battle of Algiers, thousands of people were arrested, beaten and tortured. The FLN, though temporarily uprooted in the capital, would continue the guerrilla struggle in the countryside. But the UGTA was crushed. In the remaining years of the independence struggle, the Algerian working class participated in a number of national strikes called by the FLN, but only as a sector of the "people" under petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership—no longer as a separate class force with its own mass organizations.

By setting up a bonapartist regime under de Gaulle in May-June 1958, the bourgeoisie temporarily checked the social crisis in France. De Gaulle rammed through austerity measures, ripped up collective bargaining agreements, and savagely stepped up the repression in Algeria. By 1959, the French army's vast military sweeps of the Algerian countryside had forced the FLN to break down into small, isolated units which expended much of their effort just trying to survive. This is the period when the French bourgeoisie claims it achieved "military victory." But while the general staff constantly repeated that the war was in its "last quarter of an hour," they denounced any suggestion of withdrawing French soldiers from Algeria as treason.

The Pabloites, adapting to the bourgeoisie's triumphalism, proposed a "transitional solution" that deserves to be quoted at length:

> "Imperialism's interest in oil and other Saharan riches is now undeniably the basis for its desperate eagerness to keep Algeria under its effective control.
>
> "In order to facilitate its disengagement from this position, the Algerian government could envisage, for an extended period, the setting up of a joint company to exploit the Sahara, with participation by the Algerian state, [and] French capital,...the *sine qua non* being that the Algerian state hold the absolute majority of shares. Furthermore, the profits of this exploitation could cover the foreseeable indemnification of the European agrarians and industrialists to be expropriated in Algeria."
>
> —*Quatrième Internationale*, May 1959

This was an undisguised proposal for an explicitly capitalist neocolonialist regime in Algeria, serving as compradors for the imperialists' plunder of the country.

Defeat of the French Bourgeoisie—De Gaulle Calls It a "Victory"

The fact that the French bourgeoisie did not suffer a single crushing defeat on the battlefield as they did at the hands of the Vietnamese in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu was a factor, of course, in allowing it to rewrite history. But that battle was almost unique in the history of anti-colonial struggles. What really gave the bourgeoisie a free hand in its myth-making was, above all, the fact that the Stalinists fully participated in the fraud. When de Gaulle first evoked the possibility of "self-determination" for Algeria in September 1959, the French Stalinists denounced it as "a maneuver" to cover a policy of "all-out war" (at the time, they were calling de Gaulle a "fascist"). But while the Kremlin bureaucracy couldn't have cared less about the fate of Algeria, it was keenly interested in perpetuating the tensions between de Gaulle and Washington. Khrushchev seized the occasion to dramatically declare his support for de Gaulle's position and organized an official visit to Paris. The PCF leadership was obliged to make a shamefaced self-criticism of their "error" which had "disoriented the party" (quoted in Jean Poperen, *La gauche française* [1972]).

Meanwhile, just as the Gaullist regime was claiming "victory" in late 1959, a wave of defeatism was beginning to engulf the bourgeoisie, as even the unparalleled savagery under de Gaulle showed no signs of bringing the anti-colonial struggle to an end. By 1960, the signs of this shift in bourgeois public opinion were unmistakable. An antiwar student movement had erupted, symbolized by the UNEF (National Union of French Students), the staid, corporatist student association, being transformed into a mass movement dominated by competing left groups. Meanwhile, the liberal intelligentsia began openly siding with the Algerian independence struggle. The September 1960 trial of a group of "suitcase carriers" (those who helped the FLN by transporting money) prompted a support declaration by 121 prominent intellectuals. Signed by an entire cross section of the country's cultural elite—Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Pierre Boulez, André Breton, Marguerite Duras, François Truffaut, Vercors—it declared that it was "justified" to carry out acts of "insubordination, desertion, as well as protection and aid to the Algerian combatants" (Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman, *Les porteurs de valises* [1979]).

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In the French army, the growing demoralization of the officer corps paralleled the defeatist mood of the bourgeoisie. As one historian summarized it: "As the year 1960 progressed, certain currents of conviction in the Army were perceptibly changing.... Few officers relished the thought of relinquishing Algeria to the GPRA, but an increasingly large number realized that the end of their adventure was in sight and silently submitted to the imperative" (George Kelly, *Lost Soldiers: The French Army and the Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962* [1965]). A French battalion commander wrote in a November 1960 letter: "The army has had enough! The army wants an end to the war! Of course, this refers to the army of the *djebels* [countryside], the fighting army, that is, the overwhelming majority and not the military bureaucracy of the chiefs-of-staff" (*La Nouvelle Critique*, January 1961).

Yet despite the government's increasing vulnerability—in fact, because of it—the Stalinists and social democrats persistently sought to head off major working-class battles. The *Wall Street Journal* (22 November 1960) noted: "The country's labor unions, which have shown unusual patience during the Fifth Republic's two-and-a-half years of austerity, are preparing to press for long-deferred wage increases as soon as current tension over the Algerian crisis is abated."

A key turn in the war came in December 1960, when de Gaulle's tour of Algeria was met by mass demonstrations under the FLN banner. The enormous turnout—surprising even the FLN leadership—shattered de Gaulle's hopes for a pro-French "third force" with which he could negotiate a settlement on his terms. French troops joined fascistic *colons* [European-derived population in Algeria] in murderous assaults on the crowds. But as the wave of demonstrations continued, de Gaulle finally ordered the army to halt the massacres. One historian summarized the significance of that order:

> "The happenings of December, 1960, presaged the end of the war.... By forbidding the Army to suppress the adversary, the government had chosen to talk with him. Less than six weeks later the first meeting took place between the accredited representatives of the French government and of the provisional government of the Algerian Republic."
>
> —Paul-Marie de la Gorce, *The French Army: A Military-Political History* (1963)

Military historian George Kelly noted that the mass pro-FLN demonstrations "shook sentiment in the Army badly and dissipated the tenacious dreams of an 'integrated' Algeria.... The FLN had won the 'second battle of Algiers'."

But de Gaulle put a very different spin on it, one which historians have overwhelmingly repeated. Several days after the December 1960 pro-FLN demonstrations, de Gaulle declared that he would "consent" to Algeria "choosing its own destiny," but only because of France's "genius for freeing others when the time comes." In his memoirs, he adds: "The war was practically finished. Military success had been achieved." And: "It was not the military results obtained by the FLN which made me speak as I did."

In April 1961, the tensions building up in French society under the pressure of the war exploded when French rank-and-file troops in Algeria mutinied en masse. This was provoked by an attempted putsch by French officers, seeking to head off negotiations with the FLN. French draftees spontaneously revolted within hours of their officers' putsch: they took over military bases, arrested their officers, sabotaged vehicles, cut communications and refused to carry out orders. Rank-and-file troops seized the country's main military air base in Blida, arrested the officers and reportedly raised the red flag of revolution. After driving out the paratroopers, the draftees celebrated by singing the French national anthem and the "Internationale." Defense of the base against French elite paratroopers was assured by propping up the planes so that their machine guns pointed at the entrance gate. Meanwhile, other draftees took over the Orléans barracks in Algiers, blocked the entrance with trucks and faced down the paratroopers with arms at the ready. Units at the Ouargla air base set up self-defense committees, blocked the runway with trucks and posted guards on the approach roads.

Here, too, the bourgeoisie—with vital assistance from the Stalinists—has blotted out the historical record by cultivating a mythical version of events. In this myth, rank-and-file soldiers are said to have revolted against their officers because de Gaulle appealed directly to them for support in a radio address. It's called the "Battle of the Transistors." But an attentive reading of the chronology of events shows that when de Gaulle delivered his radio speech, rank-and-file troops had already been mutinying for a full *two days*. Journalist Henri Azeau admits this fact: "Truth obliges us to recognize that, at the moment when the head of state spoke..., most of the units of the army whose officers had not remained loyal to the republic were in open or latent revolt" (Henri Azeau, *Révolte militaire: Alger, 22 avril 1961* [1962]). De Gaulle's call on the ranks looks very much like a desperate attempt to regain control of the French army in Algeria—although no historian has stated this obvious fact.

Alger Republicain

Algerian dockers on strike against 30 June 1955 arrest of union leaders by French colonial police.

Marxists Internet Archive

Ahmed Ben Bella, left, with Michel Pablo, right, in 1993.

De Gaulle's speech gave the draftees' revolt fresh impetus by "legitimizing" it and removing the enormous risk individual soldiers had run of being punished for sedition. Soldiers everywhere refused to go out on military maneuvers or follow orders. In the words of one of the few historians to write about this key event: "It was a time of strikes: strikes against [military] operations, against [radio] transmissions, against driving trucks" (Jean-Pierre Vittori, *Nous, les appelés d'Algérie* [1977]). Across Algeria, soldiers arrested officers who supported the putsch, sometimes beating them and locking them up. As Azeau noted, with the French soldiers' revolt, "de facto solidarity was established for several days between the draftees and the Muslims" which was "born of the fact that the draftees and the Muslims found themselves for several days 'on the same side of the barricades'."

The importance of trade unionists and leftists in leading the soldiers' revolt has been widely noted. But with de Gaulle's speech, the pro-capitalist politics of the leaders came to the fore. Leaflets appeared in Algeria with the slogan, "One leader: General de Gaulle." The cross of Lorraine, the Gaullist symbol, was painted on hangars in the occupied air bases. In France, the PCF called a "strike" (at 5 p.m.!); 12 million workers participated in the mass protests, many of them, like the miners and dockers, striking for a full day. But the Stalinists kept the slogans entirely directed against the "insubordinate generals" in Algiers, so that even the Gaullists supported the demonstrations. The illusions among rank-and-file troops in Algeria—but also the potential for linking the soldiers' revolt in Algeria with working-class struggle by French and Algerian workers in France—were reflected in a draftee's letter: "On the evening of Monday 24 April, our transistors were tuned to hear the magnificent protest strike.... Emotion was at its high point when the guys from Renault spoke" (Maurice Vaisse, *Alger le Putsch* [1983]).

The French soldiers' revolt, coming on top of the officers' putsch, sharply undermined the ability of the French bourgeoisie to pursue the dirty colonial war. Within a year, almost 2,000 officers were forced out of the armed forces, several elite regiments in Algeria were dissolved, others were shipped to outlying areas and deprived of enough fuel to reach Algiers. Rank-and-file soldiers streamed into police stations, offering to testify against their officers. In units throughout Algeria, soldiers refused to serve if their officers were not replaced. Arrested putsch leader General Maurice Challe declared: "The unity of the Army can now be found only in its hopelessness."

Alistair Horne concluded: "The breaking of the army in Algeria and its subsequent demoralisation deprived de Gaulle of any tool for 'enforcement.'... It was abundantly clear that de Gaulle had now no option but to negotiate purposefully to end the war." Nevertheless, de Gaulle dragged out the war for yet another year, desperately proposing scheme after scheme to avoid conceding full independence—splitting off the oil-rich Sahara, creating a mini-state on the Mediterranean coast for pro-French *colons*—and being forced to abandon each in turn. Yet throughout all these retreats, de Gaulle assiduously cultivated the myth that France had achieved a "military victory" in Algeria. In July 1961, three months after the officers' putsch and the rank-and-file mutiny, he still proclaimed (*Mémoires*):

> "In Algeria, it was necessary for our army to win in the field so that we would have full freedom of our decisions and acts. This result has been attained.... Thus, France accepts without reserve that the Algerian populations institute a completely independent state."

Lately, there have been a flurry of "balance sheets" by Algerian nationalists, tracing the roots of the regime's obvious bankruptcy to the fact that from the start it was "bureaucratic" and "undemocratic." This is basically the position of the Algerian Pabloites, who center their program on the suicidal illusion of pressuring the army-backed regime to institute "democracy." But the FLN petty-bourgeois nationalists simply aspired to become the capitalist rulers of "their" country. It is a reactionary utopia to imagine that stable parliamentary democracy—or any significant bourgeois-democratic gains—can be achieved while Algeria is crushed under the boot of imperialist exploitation and plagued by poverty, national antagonisms and medieval sexual oppression. However, it was far from inevitable that the victory of the Algerian people over French colonialism would place power in the hands of the nationalists. The history of the Algerian War is a dramatic confirmation—in the negative—of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, in which the prospect of the proletariat leading all the oppressed in a revolutionary assault on the capitalist order was subverted by one thing: the crisis of proletarian leadership.

The heroic victory of the Algerian people over French colonialism is itself ample refutation of the bourgeoisie's insolent claims to have achieved "military victory." Yet as the "memory of the working class," we Trotskyists of the International Communist League have the responsibility to wage a ceaseless fight against the bourgeoisie's efforts to bury the history of struggle by the oppressed under a mountain of myths and distortions. The history of the proletariat during the Algerian War is vital because, uniquely, through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, the working class can resolve the bourgeois-democratic tasks in Algeria and provide a living link between socialist revolution in Europe and the African continent. The fight to retrieve that history is part and parcel of the political fight against both the reformist leaders of the working class and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists in the struggle to forge a revolutionary international party. ■

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Young Spartacus

Protest Racist Cop Terror at the University of Chicago!

We reprint the following leaflet issued by the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club on February 23.

It didn't happen in Mississippi, but it sure reads like a story of Southern-style "justice" straight out of the era of Jim Crow marked by the lynching of Emmett Till: Two University of Chicago cops brutally beat a black university student for the "crime" of fraternizing with a white woman! At 3:30 in the morning on January 24, after stopping Clemmie Carthans for a WWB (walking while black), a UCPD cop saw Carthans approach a white student and give her a hug. The cop then ran toward them screaming, "Ma'am, are you all right, are you okay?" Minutes later, Carthans was grabbed by the throat, thrown to the ground, repeatedly kicked, handcuffed, punched in the mouth and slammed headfirst against a squad car three times. The officers eventually released him and he went to the emergency room for treatment for his injuries.

The assault on Carthans is one example of the police violence that is systematically employed against the black population under racist American capitalism, where all black youths are treated as potential criminals under the guise of the "war on drugs." This can only intensify as the so-called "war on terror" is brought home with a vengeance, targeting immigrants, blacks and the whole labor movement. From the bloody U.S. military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan to the cop sieges of Benton Harbor and the Miami anti-FTAA protesters, it is ***the capitalists who are carrying out a war of terror***.

In a deliberate attempt to justify their attack, the cops have brought up a previous felony conviction on Carthans' record. It is truly beneath contempt that the *Chicago Maroon*, a shameless lapdog for the racist U of C administration, latched onto this smear in its February 13th headline article as a pre-emptive exoneration of the cops. The real criminals here are the thugs of the UCPD, who commit their atrocities against black students and neighborhood residents alike with the total impunity granted to them by the U of C administration and their capitalist masters. Moreover, as in the recent case of Marcus Dixon, a Georgia high school student who was sentenced to 10 years without parole for having consensual sex at age 18 with a 15-year-old white woman, the attack on Carthans vividly shows that the "protection of white womanhood" is still a rallying cry for racist state persecution and terror.

A group of university students, rightfully outraged by this blatant attack, are petitioning the UCPD to fire these two cops and issue a formal apology to Carthans, to implement "sensitivity training" for the cops, and to reform their procedures for stopping and interrogating people. This petition, circulated by Students Organized United with Labor among others, reflects the liberal illusion that the state—the cops, the courts, the prison guards, the military—is essentially a neutral arbiter in society; or worse, that it can actually be a force for good if you just throw out the "bad apples." ***The police forces are not neutral and they cannot be reformed***. They are the armed forces of the bourgeois state whose function is "to serve and protect" the rule of the capitalist class, which means enforcing the racial oppression of black people to divide the working class and thus maintain the bosses' class rule. There will be no end to police brutality without getting rid of the capitalist system through socialist revolution.

Carthans' case reveals the raw racist reality that is capitalist America, where blacks continue to be a race-color caste forcibly segregated at the bottom of society. Whether you're down and out, or up and coming, black people are targets for cop terror. As we've seen with the 1999 cop killings of Northwestern University student Robert Russ and computer analyst LaTanya Haggerty, neither wealth nor status makes a black person in America immune to state persecution and terror. Robert Russ, LaTanya Haggerty and Clemmie Carthans all share one thing in common: Their perpetrators were all black Chicago cops. Just as your social status makes little difference to the cops if you're black, it makes no difference whether the cops themselves are white or black. Regardless of skin color, the cops all enforce the same racist status quo.

WV Photo

June 1999: Racist killings by Chicago cops sparked outrage citywide, protest march of hundreds.

Racist cop terror is nothing new in "Segregation City" Chicago nor at U of C, a leading landlord on Chicago's predominately black South Side. In a city that is 37% black, only 4% of the student population is black. Even this figure is likely to fall in the wake of the announced tuition hikes and the nationwide attacks on affirmative action. Historically, the University has been a bulwark against the black community and is backed by a private army of campus cops who systematically harass and terrorize blacks. Since Carthans made his case public, at least ten students have stepped forward to report similar cases of harassment and attacks. Cops off campus! Abolish the racist, union-busting U of C administration! Nationalize the University! The gates of the "ivory tower" should be thrown open to the sons and daughters of the black families who live and work on the South Side. For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students!

The assault on Carthans comes on the heels of the firing of 52 workers at the University of Chicago Hospitals. Ludicrously, the administration smeared these workers as "thieves" for parking in the wrong parking lot. This is simply a union-busting assault on the predominantly black unions during their contract negotiations. Reinstate the UCH workers with no loss of pay!

But the working class is not just a victim of exploitation. Since October, 70,000 supermarket workers in Southern California have been locked in a strike battle against their rapacious bosses. We call for a victory to the United Food and Commercial Workers strike and an extension of this strike nationwide. In solidarity, we have been campaigning to raise money among youth to help the striking workers pay their bills so that they can hold out on the picket lines and win.

The multiracial proletariat holds in its hands both the social power and the historic interest to fight against the exploiters and their state terror, in defense of blacks and immigrants, and indeed, to smash the whole capitalist system through socialist revolution. In America, black workers are a strategic component of the working class and the whole labor movement, providing a living link between the social power of the factories and the anger of the ghettos. The key is to build a multiracial revolutionary workers party infused with the understanding that there can be no end to black oppression without a socialist revolution, and at the same time there can be no socialist revolution unless labor champions the cause of black freedom.

The obstacle to unleashing labor/black power is the misleadership of the trade union bureaucrats, who are tied by a thousand strings to the racist, anti-labor Democratic Party. In this election year, many rank-and-file workers also look to the Democratic Party as the alternative to President Bush and his ghoulish cabal. However, the fact remains that the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are the party of war and racism, 100% committed to upholding the capitalist order on the backs of the working class and oppressed. It was under Clinton's Presidency that the black prison population skyrocketed, under the guise of the "war on drugs," while black Democrats like Jesse Jackson Sr. supported the launching of that campaign. The very thought of the working class taking up the fight for black freedom in America sends a shiver down the spine of the American bourgeoisie—and the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy.

As revolutionary Marxists, we of the Spartacus Youth Club are looking for a few class traitors at the University of Chicago who are repulsed by this racist capitalist society and desire to fight for a socialist egalitarian society dedicated to the liberation of humanity. For black liberation through socialist revolution!■

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BOSTON
Wednesday, 6 p.m.

March 17: **Bigots In Frenzy over Same-Sex Marriage! Full Democratic Rights for Gays!**

Boston University,
Room TBA

Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

TORONTO
Thursday, 6:30 p.m.

March 18: **Defend the Palestinians! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!**

York University Student Centre
Room TBA

Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.albn.com

CHICAGO
Thursday, 7 p.m.

March 11: **The Struggle for Black Liberation: The Key to Socialist Revolution in America**

University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, 5811 S. Ellis Ave., Room 204

Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK CITY
Tuesday, 8 p.m.

March 30: **Capitalism and Women's Oppression—The Fight for Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!**

Columbia University
Fayerweather Hall, Room 302

Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

LOS ANGELES
Saturday, 2 p.m.

March 13: **Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)

Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@cs.com

BAY AREA
Thursday, 5 p.m.

March 11: **Celebrate International Women's Day! Defend Abortion Rights Through Class Struggle!**

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Room C-112, Downstairs

Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sfsyc@sfsu.edu

Columbia...

(continued from page 12)

The attacks against black students on campus are a sign of the times. As the Bush administration, with the Democrats in tow, sends the U.S. military rampaging across the globe and cracks down on immigrants and labor at home in the name of the "war on terror," black people have seen the onslaught against them worsen. Inner-city public school funding has been slashed, even as voucher programs and charter schools get shoved down the throats of black people and immigrants in the ghettos and barrios. Black and Latino students in New York State today are less likely to graduate on time than anywhere else in the country. Cop violence against black people continues unabated, as the killing of black youth Timothy Stansbury Jr. in Brooklyn earlier this year illustrates. For many black youth, there is no escape from the poverty of the ghettos; nearly half of all black men between the ages of 16 and 64 in New York City are without a job.

In the days following the "bake sale," the Spartacus Youth Club mobilized for a protest under the demands "Defend Affirmative Action!" and "Protest Racist Provocation by the Columbia College Conservative Club!" Chanting "Defend affirmative action, down with racist reaction!" and carrying placards with such slogans as "Finish the Civil War! For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!", the SYC led a spirited demonstration on February 12, drawing Columbia students to a protest against the racist offensive.

The Spartacus Youth Clubs defend affirmative action in university education because it has brought gains, albeit terribly inadequate, against the race- and class bias that permeates education under capitalism. But the reforms won through the civil rights movement like affirmative action are demonstrably reversible. Today the schools are re-segregating, and the number of black students at elite universities is dwindling, particularly at schools like UCLA and UC Berkeley, where affirmative action was eliminated in 1996. Elsewhere, the racist purge of the universities is driven not so much by admissions policies as by the exorbitant and steeply increasing cost of tuition.

Campus Administration: Tools of the Bourgeoisie

As if the "bake sale" were not enough, the *Federalist*, a campus newspaper better known for its asinine bathroom humor than incisive political commentary, ran a vile cartoon that explicitly treated slavery and all of black oppression as a joke the following week. The cartoon declared, "Black people were invented in the 1700s as a form of cheap labor," and went on to regurgitate a series of disgusting stereotypes of black people. The editorial board of the paper tacked on a flippant disclaimer, declaring the cartoon "kinda offensive." The *Fed* later apologized for the cartoon, but the CCCC was not contrite. In a letter to the *Columbia Spectator* (February 26), the CCCC president and executive director declared: "We stand behind the bake sale and offer no apologies for the principles upon which it stood."

In response to the *Fed* cartoon, as well as the "bake sale" and the Columbia University Marching Band's "Orgo Night" in December, in which the band sneered at and insulted black people and women, a newly formed group called Columbia University Concerned Students of Color (CUCSC) initiated a series of silent vigils in front of the administration building. These vigils dominated discussions on campus that week as hundreds of students candidly expressed how minority students are under siege on the campus. As anger at the racist provocations grew, finally students dispensed with the self-censorship of the silent vigils. Over 100 people participated in a February 26 speakout, chanting "Bollinger just face it, this campus is racist!" and "We are here for education, not to face discrimination!"

Young Spartacus

SYC mobilized students in speakout against anti-affirmative action "bake sale" at Columbia, February 12.

During the speakout, a small group of students went inside to present Columbia president Bollinger with a list of demands. Other students were angered at not being shown the demands taken to the administration until a CUCSC meeting three days later. At that meeting, where the organizers disappeared discussion of additional protest, one of the CUCSC leaders involved in the negotiations indicated that students were kept in the dark so as to avoid jeopardizing a working relationship with the administration! Further, the leaflet of eight "Demands Presented by CUCS to Central Administration for a More Diverse Columbia" handed out at this meeting omitted the most controversial point in the CUCSC "Student proposal for a more diverse Columbia" posted on the Web and "submitted" to the administration. This point called for "disciplinary actions and policies to prevent and handle transgressions against marginalized student populations."

The dangerous view that the administration is a potential ally of minority students on campus is explicit in this and other CUCSC demands. If implemented, the "proposal" would significantly increase the authority of the administration to intrude into and control the political life of Columbia. And the administration has its own class bias—it is the extension of the capitalist state on campus and answerable to the university's Board of Trustees, a collection of capitalist magnates. To grant the administration the authority to intervene into the political activity of student groups would give it a much freer hand in repressing political dissent by leftists, black people and other minorities. For example, one could well imagine legions of rabid Zionists, as has happened on other campuses, running to the administration with cries of "anti-Semitism" to encourage a crackdown on any pro-Palestinian protest.

No amount of "Multicultural Affairs" administrators or "Committees on Diversity"—prominent demands of the CUCSC—can change the fact that the university is a privileged bastion of racism and an arrogant bully of neighboring Harlem. In 1968, the militant student revolt at Columbia was sparked by the university's refusal to allow the black community access to a gymnasium Columbia planned to build in Morningside Park. Columbia continues this tradition to this day as a notorious slumlord. More recently, the administration has aided and abetted the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt, turning over immigrant students' names to the federal government in 2001 soon after Bush declared his "war on terror."

Columbia's main role is to provide the State Department with diplomats, the Pentagon with new missile technology and corporations with a new generation of union-busting lawyers. The 1968 student protests at Columbia, which among other victories drove the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) off campus, explicitly recognized that the university was a warmongering institution directly and intimately linked to racist U.S. imperialism. In that period, a group of black students occupied the ROTC lounge in Columbia's Hartley Hall and renamed it Malcolm X Lounge, which today serves as the Black Students Organization's meeting space. It is worth noting that Bollinger's most recent previous statement against "offensive speech" on campus was a denunciation of professor Nicholas De Genova, who made laudable anti-imperialist remarks at a teach-in during the Iraq war. (See "Down With the Witchhunt Against De Genova!" *WV* No. 801, 11 April 2003.)

Last week, Bollinger issued a statement that spoke of the administration's "commitment to a spirit of tolerance and mutual respect" (*Columbia Spectator*, 24 February). Such fraudulent pieties are typically doled out when "liberal" institutions reveal themselves as the bastions of race and class privilege they are. Bollinger, who during his tenure as president at the University of Michigan fought anti-affirmative action lawsuits, has angered many students with his perceived complacency. But behind Bollinger's defense of affirmative action, like that of much of the ruling class, is the view that such programs provide a gloss of "diversity" to the racist capitalist system by maintaining a layer of middle-class minority professionals (as well as officers in a disproportionately non-white U.S. military). The racist rulers want to have black front men to help bolster their class rule.

The CUCSC looks to the administration to intervene to create a "safe space" for minorities on campus, such as by establishing a "Multicultural Affairs Office." But it is impossible to transform a small part of Columbia into an island of racial equality by pleading with the administration; racism on campus is a reflection of black oppression in capitalist America. Amid the all-sided offensive against black people in recent years, the achievement of full social equality has seemed to many a distant prospect at best. Talk of a "safe space" is both an understandable reaction to the very real prejudices permeating the campus and an accommodation to them. The SYC defends the right of minority students to set up separate housing at various campuses across the country. However, self-segregation only serves to reinforce and legitimize the segregation in American society as a whole.

Further, the CUCSC's demand for "anti-oppression training" expresses the mistaken belief that racial oppression is the result of "bad ideas." But black oppression has a material basis in a country built on the backs of black slaves, a country where black people still face segregation and police brutality, a country where racist bigotry is used to divide and repress working people. Instead of accepting racism as a given, all anti-racist students should *fight* for genuine equality for black people and other minorities, which in the end requires a revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system itself.

The Problem with Pressure Politics

At one silent vigil, we were repeatedly asked not to hold our own signs, with the slogan "Abolish the Administration! For Student/Faculty/Worker Control of the Universities!" drawing great ire, both from demonstration organizers and student club advisers. At another, we were told that only the leaflets of the vigil organizers could be distributed. Such attempts at censoring us came about because while the CUCSC makes appeals to Bollinger, the SYC intervened in meetings and the February 26 speakout to motivate mobilizing students angered by the racist provocations in protest *against* the administration. Down with censorship!

At the CUCSC speakout, multiple students exhorted the crowd to vote in the upcoming elections as a means of ameliorating the condition of black people and other minorities in this society. The SYC speaker there warned against any illusions in the Democratic Party. At our February 12 protest, SYC spokesman Erica Jones stated that voting for the Democrats "means voting for the party of Jim Crow segregation, massive prison construction, welfare destruction and the party that not only endorsed the war in Iraq and the 12-year sanctions there, but also the party of the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba, the war in Vietnam and North Korea."

Where the liberals seek to sanitize the racist status quo, we Marxists fight to win students to the side of the working class, the only class capable of overturning the capitalist system. As the Boston SYC wrote in a letter to Boston University's *Daily Free Press* (27 February) about the "bake sale" held there February 18: "Just as it took the Civil War to smash chattel slavery, it will take a workers revolution to sweep away the entire capitalist system and lay the basis for wiping out the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression."

The International Socialist Organization (ISO), despite their name, devote their efforts to the futile strategy of trying to pressure the capitalist rulers (and their lackeys in the campus administrations) to somehow act in the interests of the exploited and oppressed. The ISO refused to endorse our February 12 protest; like the liberals, the ISO preferred to silently beg the administration to establish the ever-elusive "safe space" rather than seek to mobilize outrage at the racist attacks on campus against the administration. In its first printed statement following the "bake sale," the ISO *did not condemn it* as racist but rather complained that the CCCC had "trivialized affirmative

continued on page 8

YOUNG SPARTACUS CORRECTIONS

In "ISO Reaches Its Nader" (*WV* No. 818, 23 January), we wrote that "we are still eight months away from the presidential elections." In fact, Election Day 2004 is November 2, more than nine months from when the article was first printed. In "Trotskyist Youth Intervene in Student Strikes at Berlin Universities" (*WV* No. 819, 6 February), the caption for the photo of the IG Metall strike support rally at Berlin Technical University on page 6 incorrectly dates the rally as taking place in May 2003 when it actually was held in May 2002.

Columbia...

(continued from page 7)

action," much like the president of the College Democrats felt the "bake sale" was a "trivialization" (*Columbia Spectator*, February 10). This gutless reaction misses the point—racist provocations make targets of and incite physical attacks on minority students.

The ISO later referred to the "bake sale" as racist in their February 26 protest speech, but only after the liberals were doing so as well. Such abject tailing of liberals is almost instinctive for the ISO. For example, in response to the racist cop killing of Amadou Diallo in New York City in 1999, the ISO pushed a program almost identical to that of black Democrat Al Sharpton, who introduced a whitewash list of empty demands to "reform" the police.

In an article on the right-wing attack on affirmative action in the 27 February issue of *Socialist Worker*, the ISO says, "Affirmative action was a direct result of the civil rights movement's successful effort to force the federal government to recognize the systematic racism that thrived in U.S. society." In fact, affirmative action programs were set up as a sop to *defuse* social struggle. The affirmative action programs in education established in response to the protests and upheavals of the '60s were at best a limited gain for a tiny percentage of minorities and women; in industry the racist rulers initially implemented hiring quotas with the intention of breaking the unions and exacerbating racial divisions in the workforce.

Further, the ISO suggests that the key in the fight for black rights lies in convincing the federal government to acknowledge the existence of racism. Not only is it absurd that anyone can think Bush is unaware of racial disparities—his old nickname, "Governor Death," comes from the stack of bodies of disproportionately black and Latino men he executed in Texas—but it also flies in the face of history. By preaching reliance on the federal government, black Democrats and reformists demobilized struggles for black equality, straining to keep militant fighters against black oppression within the confines of Democratic Party electoralism. While the liberal-led civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s shattered the Jim Crow system, it did not—and within the confines of capitalism, could not—get to the root of black oppression. In adapting to the program of the liberals, the ISO has adopted their view of history.

Racist Ideologues on the Offensive

The CCCC has made itself infamous for witchhunting the late Edward Said, sponsoring racist ideologues like David Horowitz on campus, pushing anti-gay bigotry and even protesting the use of Columbia University facilities in the filming of the Comedy Central movie, *Porn 'n Chicken*. Though they are an unappetizing, puritanical, bigoted bunch, their provocation was not merely the action of a few yahoos. At our protest, Erica Jones noted that the CCCC's provocation was not an isolated affront to minorities on campus, as the Conservative Club has "ties to right-wing think tanks and groups such as Campus Watch and those bigots in the White House who are consciously and intentionally pushing to roll back what civil rights gains remain from the '60s.... To let these racists go unanswered only emboldens them and their racist agenda."

Columbia College Today

Columbia, April 1968: Black students and supporters occupying Hamilton Hall. Wave of student protest, building occupations was directed against school administration and its links to racist U.S. imperialism.

The CUCSC "proposal" begins, "Nowhere is the freedom of speech an absolute right." What the CUCSC means is shown in its call for the administration "to reduce the funding for groups that use University monies to verbally and/or physically harass students based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or class." Appeals for censorship and repression by the administration would play straight into the trap laid by the right-wingers. On several campuses, university administrations have attempted to shut down the reactionaries' provocations by invoking PC "speech codes"—which is exactly what the conservatives want, so that they, overbred scions and defenders of ruling-class privilege that they are, can bleat about being ostensibly oppressed. Indeed, on such campuses as the University of Colorado and the University of Washington, the right-wing Foundation for Individual Rights in Education has leapt into the fray with lawyers and Fox News camera crews in tow, broadcasting the aggrieved conservatives' cries of martyrdom. The bible-thumping Alliance Defense Fund and the notorious Center for Individual Rights have also joined in the attack.

The all-purpose racist, pro-imperialist pig, David Horowitz, has recently seized on supposed violations of the "academic freedom" of campus conservatives to launch his campaign for a grossly misnamed "Academic Bill of Rights," which purports to promote "intellectual diversity" on college campuses. In an interview in the *Columbia Spectator* (25 February), Horowitz touts the myth that conservatives are persecuted at American universities, even implausibly arguing that "Marxists at Columbia are the ruling class, but they like to think of themselves as victims." The "Academic Bill of Rights" is in reality an attempt to provide the basis for a purge of the left from campuses, with demands for "duly authorized authorities" to snoop into tenure and hiring decisions. Such an approach is likely to be about as evenhanded in practice as the jingoistic tirades on Fox News are "fair and balanced."

The SYC has exposed and protested Horowitz on campuses around the nation in recent years. The ambitions of the likes of David Horowitz, the self-satisfied Ivy League right-wingers and the ruling class, which bases its opulent lifestyle on the suffering and exploitation of others, will not be thwarted through liberal appeals to the class enemy. The capitalist system in the U.S. is buttressed by the special oppression of racial minorities, black people in particular, whether through the grinding poverty and naked repression facing the ghetto masses or even attacks on the precarious positions of the all too few minorities on elite campuses. We fight for free, quality integrated education for all as part of our fight against all of the inequities and iniquities of capitalism. As our leaflet building for our February 12 demonstration noted:

> "To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. Open the gates of Columbia to the people of Harlem! We demand full remedial programs at the universities, an end to the racist 'tracking' system in the high schools and genuine integration of the schools, including the aggressive implementation of busing. But lasting gains cannot be achieved through a strategy of pressuring the campus administration, the Supreme Court or other capitalist institutions. Today, as in the past, it will take massive social struggle to gain any improvement in the lives of oppressed minorities in this society."

Class struggle is the only way forward. Students must take their fight against racism on campus to the multiracial working class of New York City, from campus workers to the hospital workers at St. Luke's to the transit workers, who have social power that students lack. Labor has the power to stop production, to stop the flow of profits, and the power and organization to restructure society on the basis of a socialist economy. The SYCs, youth/student auxiliaries to the Marxist Spartacist League, seek to win youth to the perspective of building a revolutionary workers party that will lead the proletariat in bringing down this whole rotten, racist capitalist system. ■

Gay Marriage...

(continued from page 12)

dead people"—a statement seen by many as an incitement to violence against gays and lesbians. Now the governor has declared that he is not opposed to gay marriage if the people want to change the current state law, and announced, "I have no use for a constitutional amendment" (*SF Chronicle*, 2 March). Though California Superior Court judges have refused to halt the marriages, on February 27 Lockyer bypassed the state's trial courts and asked the state Supreme Court to stop SF officials from issuing same-sex marriage licenses and to invalidate all the weddings that have taken place at City Hall over the past two weeks.

The marriage certificates don't appear to have much more than sentimental value at this point, notes *The Advocate* (24 February). The National Coalition for Lesbian Rights advises all those who are married in San Francisco to register as domestic partners since there is no guarantee they will receive the rights of heterosexual married couples. And in an act of bureaucratic revenge, so typical of small-minded bigots, the Bush administration has just ordered Social Security administrators nationwide to reject all name changes based on any marriage license—straight or gay—recently issued by San Francisco!

Bush's actions have emboldened right-wing reactionaries. On February 19, a group of Christian fundamentalists carrying homophobic banners were ejected from City Hall after attempting to stop the issuance of marriage licenses to gays. The two groups challenging the same-sex marriage licenses in court are the Campaign for California Families and Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund (represented by the Alliance Defense Fund). Both groups are part of an all-out assault by "family values" bigots against gays, women and abortion rights. The *New York Times* (29 February) carried a full-page ad applauding Bush's "courage" in putting forward the Federal Marriage Amendment; it was signed by Jerry Falwell and almost 100 of his fellow right-wing Christian fundamentalist bigots.

Legal marriage will do little to stop the prejudice and violence faced by gays and anyone else who steps outside the stifling boundaries of bourgeois morality. The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs shows a rise in homicides and assaults against lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual victims in 2002, including a 25 percent increase in the San Francisco area. The vicious beating death of Gwen Araujo, a Latina transgender woman in the Bay Area that year, is just the tip of a large iceberg.

Same-sex marriage challenges religious values and ingrained social mores among working people and throughout society at large. While there's a broad layer that empathizes with gays who seek the legal protections marriage offers, there's also significant opposition. In its extreme, one gets the phenomenon of a black Baptist minister, the Rev. Gregory Daniels, who declared, "If the K.K.K. opposes gay marriage, I would ride with them" (*New York Times*, 1 March). He might saddle up, but it will be a short ride—the first target of this motley collection of nativist, anti-labor fascists is black people.

We have had to argue with workers in the Bay Area that democratic rights are indivisible. The fates of those subjected to special oppression in capitalist society—homosexuals, women, immigrants, blacks—are inextricably intertwined because such oppression helps prop up the capitalist system of exploitation; when even partial gains are won by any sector of the oppressed, it's a victory for both the workers movement and all others who face discrimination. Marriage laws in particular have been used to enforce discrimination; Alabama only overturned its ban on interracial marriage in 2000!

San Francisco has long been a haven for mainly white, petty-bourgeois gays. The annual Gay Pride March—once viewed as a political statement against legal and social discrimination—years ago became a mainstream Democratic Party event, where the gay cop contingent is wildly cheered. Long gone are the mildly radical '70s "gay liberation" days, which at least implicitly challenged bourgeois social morals, including monogamous marriage. Today the rush by gays to get married is part of a quest for legitimacy within the framework of, and explicitly embracing, bourgeois "family values." Yet "family values" are the ideological bulwark of the institution of the family and the vehicle for gay oppression in this country.

Bigotry against gays flows from entrenched sexual stereotyping decreed by the sexual division of labor in the family, the root of the oppression of women in bourgeois society, and is enforced by religious moral codes against "sin." Capitalist society needs the family, a conservatizing force and the mechanism by which capitalist private property is passed down from generation to generation; it cannot ultimately 'legitimatize' those who fundamentally deviate from its restrictions. The family is a key prop of capitalist class rule, which can only be rooted out through the overthrow of this profit-driven system of exploitation. ■

UFCW...

(continued from page 1)

in solidarity with the UFCW strike. In a huge display of labor power, some 20,000 workers turned out on January 31 for a strike rally in Inglewood. However, these numbers were not mobilized *on the picket lines—where it counts—to shut down the stores and grocery distribution centers.* As one striker told *WV*, "We could have shut down the distribution centers. The Teamsters didn't have to wait a month to back us. I can't understand why the picket lines were taken down from Ralphs."

Dozens of strike militants and their supporters were arrested on the picket lines. The union bureaucracy devised civil disobedience actions involving clergy and politicians as a diversion, but workers endeavored to turn these actions into real displays of union power to close the stores. In mid-January, 15 picketers were arrested at a Vons store in Garden Grove for defending their picket line during a protest rally that drew 1,200 strike supporters. More than three dozen protesters were arrested on February 19 for briefly blocking entrances at four Vons stores in Los Angeles, Santa Monica, San Pedro and Mission Viejo. Many arrested workers still face charges ranging from "trespassing" to allegations of attacks on scabs. The entire labor movement must join the UFCW to demand: *Drop all the charges! No reprisals against strike militants!*

UFCW Local 770 president Rick Icaza recently said, "I felt that by having that relationship...we had passed the era of a need for strikes. I thought those days were over." The union misleaders' entire strategy rests on a program of class collaboration, a purely electoral and legalistic strategy of lobbying for pro-labor legislation and herding votes for the Democrats. Dority described the strike as "successful" because it "sounded the alarm that the American health care system is ready to collapse"—i.e., the strike was a pressure tactic to "demand that every candidate for office commits to comprehensive, affordable health insurance for every working family" (UFCW press statement, 27 February).

It is important to underscore that the UFCW strikers are going back to work with their union still intact, having persevered against a vicious opponent and fighting with one hand tied behind their backs. But the outcome of this strike is a bitter setback—the labor tops going all the way up to the AFL-CIO leadership not only betrayed the UFCW workers, but all of labor. What is vital is for the working class to draw the lessons of the UFCW strike.

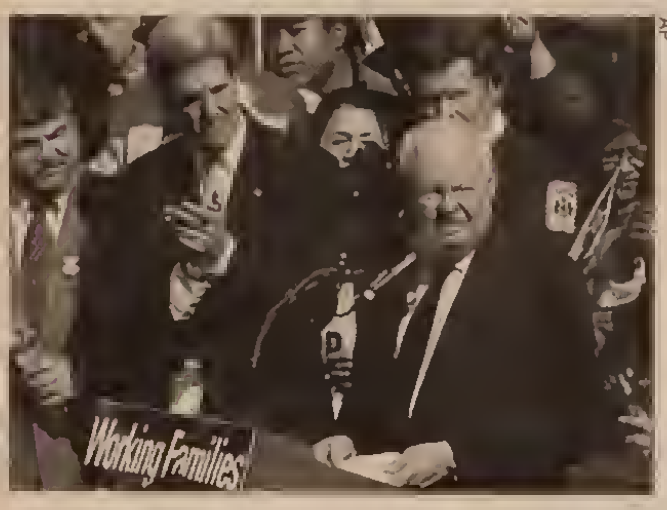
This strike—both the courageous determination of the workers and the venal treachery of the bureaucrats—underlined in the most stark terms the necessity of fighting for a new leadership in the unions. The unions are mass organizations of workers to defend their economic interests against the capitalists; but to consistently fulfill that role they must be led by a class-struggle, anti-capitalist leadership that understands that the interests of the workers and the capitalists are counterposed. We print below part one of a January 31 forum by Spartacist League speaker Steve Henderson. He explains that the road to victory lies in mobilizing labor's power independently of, and in opposition to, the Democratic and Republican parties. Working people need a party that fights for *their* class interests, a workers party committed to overturning this whole system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression.

Peters/UFCW Local 1546

September 2003: Illinois UFCW protest against Wal-Mart. A UFCW victory could have opened door to organizing nation's largest private employer.

PART ONE

After 16 weeks on the picket lines in the longest strike in UFCW history, determined grocery workers are still hanging tough. And working people across the country are closely watching this labor showdown because they know the outcome will shape their future and that of their children. Millions are without health coverage and even more are one paycheck away from a family medical and financial catastrophe. The grocery bosses want to effectively eliminate medical benefits, slash wages and pensions, and smash the union. If they get away with it, it will set the standard for capitalist takebacks and union-busting efforts across the country. But if, on the other hand, the grocery workers win, it could be the springboard for union organizing and a labor offensive against America's arrogant capitalist rulers. The stakes are high and this strike *can* win. But it will take the mobilization of labor's power on a national scale.



AP

AFL-CIO president John Sweeney announces endorsement of Democratic Party presidential hopeful John Kerry. Labor tops subordinate workers to capitalist Democratic Party.

Despite porous picket lines and the union bureaucrats' sabotage of efforts to shut down the distribution centers, the strike is having an economic impact on the grocery corporations' revenues in Southern California. But there must be a fight to spread the strike nationally and to shut down grocery operations in order to make a major dent in the grocery giants' overall profits. And in order for the strikers to hang on long enough to win, the labor movement has to immediately send money to replenish the strike fund—the strikers can't live on air. The main political obstacle to waging this kind of class-struggle fight and mobilizing the full resources of labor against the bosses is the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, from the local level on up to the national AFL-CIO leadership of John Sweeney, Richard Trumka and the rest.

The outbreak of widespread and widely popular class struggle is a welcome change and the necessary response to the capitalists' "war on terror," which in fact is a war on workers and the oppressed here and internationally. Many here will remember the New Jersey teachers vilified as agents of the Taliban for daring to strike after September 11. But it was not just America's capitalist rulers and their politicians who used September 11 to push the lie of the bosses' "national unity." The top echelons of organized labor loudly added their voice to the government's patriotic propaganda barrage. Shortly after September 11, AFL-CIO president John Sweeney proclaimed: "We are solidly behind the president and our troops in the field and we will remain so until worldwide terrorism is eradicated" (speech to Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, AFL-CIO Web site, 16 October 2001).

Some local labor leaders, reflecting growing disaffection especially among black and minority unionists, opposed the war in Afghanistan and later Iraq. But they did not do so on a class-struggle basis. Instead, the liberal and reformist leaders of the short-lived antiwar movement proclaimed that "peace is patriotic," pushed illusions in UN-sanctioned imperialist intervention, and mainly sought to channel popular discontent into an anti-Bush campaign to benefit the Democratic Party of imperialism and war leading up to the 2004 elections. In the antiwar protests we put forward a perspective for working-class struggle against capitalism and its wars, and we told a basic truth: the only way to end imperialist wars is through international socialist revolution. We called for the defense of Afghanistan and Iraq against U.S. imperialist attack. And we called for class struggle against the U.S. capitalist rulers!

For socialists it is a given that those who embrace the aims of imperialist capitalism abroad are incapable of effectively defending the interests of labor and the oppressed at home. The bourgeois triumphalism and capitalist arrogance in the wake of U.S. imperialism's easy wins in Afghanistan and Iraq set the stage for the bosses today telling grocery workers to drop dead, the continuing attacks on immigrants, the L.A. cop and FBI raids on black housing projects and the police sweeps of downtown L.A. homeless encampments, the threats to shut down King/Drew hospital which serves South Central.

In the case of the grocery strike, the connection is direct: Safeway CEO Steven Burd was appointed by "Homeland Security" czar Tom Ridge to a high-level private sector advisory committee in December, while in the Bay Area, agents from the Contra Costa sheriff's homeland security detail recently visited a local union hall to intimidate labor officials planning protests near Burd's home. That the "war on terror" is a war on workers and the oppressed should be clear.

Pro-imperialist labor bureaucrats like John Sweeney argue that with a Democrat in the White House, there can be both guns *and* butter, imperialist war abroad *and* domestic prosperity at home. Well, with the Clinton administration there was the blockade of Iraq, the invasions of Haiti and Somalia, the terror bombing and destruction of Serbia—so there was plenty of imperialist war. Domestically, the Democrats abolished welfare, built more prisons and more fences on the Mexican-American border, strengthened the death penalty, and put more cops on the street. During the '90s economic boom, unions still declined, immigrants were used, abused and thrown out of the country, and the conditions for blacks in the ghettos became even more hellish. Sweeney's "America First" perspective of enlisting unions as minor beneficiaries of imperialist plunder is not only poisonous national chauvinism but a lie. The same capitalist rulers—Democrat and Republican—who are waging war abroad are waging war at home against immigrants, blacks and minorities, and the entire labor movement.

So this is the political context in which the strikes and lockouts are taking place. This talk focuses more on the continuing grocery strike, but our first article in *Workers Vanguard* on the strike wave here in Southern California was titled "L.A. Strike City" (*WV* No. 812, 24 October 2003). There is a reason why L.A. has over the past several years been called the strike capital of the U.S. It has a very large immigrant workforce and many come to this country with a higher level of political consciousness and more militant traditions of class struggle. Almost 40 percent of the workforce in greater L.A. is Latino, about two-thirds of whom are foreign born. Even with lower rates of unionization among recent arrivals, roughly 14 percent of union members here are Latino immigrants. Moreover, immigrants and ethnic minorities are concentrated in relatively low-wage jobs. These workers do not accept the current state of affairs in which the unions are increasingly job trusts resting on the gains of the past, but expect them to act as instruments of struggle to better their lives.

Back in October the maintenance workers in the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) shut down L.A. transit, striking to defend their medical benefits, and the bus drivers union, also in contract negotiations, was honoring their picket lines. SEIU Local 660—representing 50,000 L.A. and Orange County public workers—was working without a contract and health care benefits were again the main issue in dispute. There was the possibility here for key unions in Southern

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SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-li.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

UFCW...

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California to link up in strike action, which would have created a serious political problem for the bourgeoisie and could have forced favorable settlements for all the unions.

But the SEIU leadership refused to strike and instead made compromises over wages and health care benefits, avoiding a confrontation with the Democratic Party administrations running local government here. The ATU leadership followed the lead of so-called "friends of labor" Democrats like Antonio Villaraigosa, who simply wanted to diffuse a hot political situation. They scuttled the transit strike after one month and sent the membership back to work with no agreement on health care, leaving it to a pro-company "mediation" committee to decide the fate of the union's medical benefits. A favorable opportunity for class struggle was thus betrayed on behalf of the Democratic Party.

If unions are to start winning some strikes, a central lesson here is the need for the unconditional independence of labor from the bosses' government and the bosses' political parties—both Democratic and Republican. And this includes the bourgeois Green Party, as well. We need our own party, a revolutionary workers party that acts as a tribune of all the oppressed and mobilizes labor's power in class struggle against capitalism and for a socialist future.

Mobilize the Power of Labor!

Today, striking UFCW workers remain locked in a bitter struggle for the very survival of their union. They are faced with the reality that their enemy is at home in the form of bloodsucking and profit-hungry grocery bosses. However, the UFCW leaders have relied essentially on public sympathy for the strikers, along with Democratic Party-dominated rallies, to sway the bosses—which doesn't work. As far as these things go, the consumer boycott has been somewhat successful in Southern California, but even that was undermined when the UFCW took down the picket lines at Ralphs. More importantly, appealing to the general public is not a substitute for labor mobilizing its power to shut down production and distribution, and crucially, to spread the strike. Now the strike fund is almost depleted. Strike pay is down to $100-150 per week, many strikers have had their medical coverage lapse, and all are facing great personal hardship. Although scabbing by UFCW members is not widespread, some demoralized elements have returned to work.

Now Sweeney's AFL-CIO leadership has announced it's taking over "national strategy" for the strike. So what's happened and what is the way forward? Well, let's start by telling the truth so that workers can forge a leadership in the unions based on a Marxist understanding and class-struggle program.

According to a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* (22 January), local union leaders said they were blindsided in the negotiations by the depth of the cuts demanded by the supermarket giants and that they subsequently underestimated the ability of the three chains to stay united against the workers. That they underestimated management's resolve is obvious, but this is largely self-justification and abdicating responsibility for their failed strategies and refusal to wage hard class struggle. A year before this strike began, the national UFCW leaders met with the corporate CEOs in preparation for the contract negotiations that would soon be taking place piecemeal by locals across the country. They walked away from this meeting knowing that the grocery bosses would demand massive concessions. Instead of mobilizing the combined national strength of the union, each region was left to negotiate separately.

When the strike dragged on here in Southern California, the local union tops offered $500 million in concessions, assuming such a huge giveback would end the strike. But the grocery bosses are out for blood and they rejected it. The basic underlying problem is that the union misleaders accept and defend the capitalist system. They routinely sign "compromise" contracts laden with concessions in order to keep class peace, and then are utterly disarmed when the bosses really decide to play hardball and demand total capitulation—it's been one-sided class war.

Many strikers are frustrated and angry with the leadership and the way it has run the strike. There is widespread bitterness that the pickets were taken down at Ralphs, which is sharing its windfall profits with the other chains in an act of capitalist solidarity. Union militants want a solid strike. That the regional food distribution centers, which are mainly organized by the Teamsters, were picketed at all is testament to the pressure from the Teamsters ranks against the resistance of their leadership. They understand that if the UFCW loses, they'll be targeted next year when their contract expires. But these efforts at union solidarity have been repeatedly sabotaged; the Teamsters tops have again sent their members back to work and the UFCW has dismantled the pickets at Teamsters warehouses. At the El Monte distribution center, where UFCW members worked as meat cutters, strikers have defiantly refused to take down their lines and Teamsters are still honoring them, but that is the exception.

So what are our political opponents on the left saying about all this? The Workers World Party has shamelessly supported the UFCW misleaders' every move, in particular their decision to take down the pickets at Ralphs. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) also abets the bureaucrats, calling the decision a "strategic blunder." In an ISO article titled "How Can the UFCW Win?" (*Socialist Worker* online, 23 January), the author said he "respectfully" asked a UFCW official at a support meeting to "be willing to acknowledge a mistaken strategy and move on to shutting down the stores...." But the decision was not some error; it flowed from the bureaucracy's class-collaborationist program. And this is what the ISO avoids saying, because at bottom they seek to be "left" advisers to one or another "progressive" wing of the bureaucracy. The ISO even lavishes praise on pro-Democratic Party labor sellouts like Miguel Contreras, who brokered the deal between Antonio Villaraigosa and ATU president Neil Silver to scuttle the transit strike. One UFCW striker who read our paper, *Workers Vanguard*, and the ISO's *Socialist Worker* told us she liked the ISO because they are "less Marxist." Well, I'm sorry she doesn't agree with Marxism and I'd like to convince her otherwise, but she's certainly correct in her assessment of the ISO.

Now that the UFCW's back is up against the wall, the AFL-CIO national leadership has stepped in, with secretary-treasurer Richard Trumka running "national strategy." It's no accident that the AFL-CIO leadership was all over the FTAA protests in Florida, because that's where they can push their protectionist program in the guise of opposing sweatshops. Yet for months they completely ignored the class struggle at home with the UFCW strikes. The AFL-CIO tops want to blame foreign labor, but when American workers go on strike the bureaucrats have done virtually nothing.

This strike needs to squeeze the grocery chains' flow of profit, because Wall Street investors vote with their pocketbook, not their "conscience." The grocery giants are taking a hit in Southern California, but they have nationwide operations that give them a significant buffer. The AFL-CIO is planning a few informational pickets at some stores around the country, asking for a consumer boycott, rather than decisively spreading the strike to really hurt business operations nationally. The UFCW has already settled strikes in some regions. It should have been "one out, all out"—until everyone has a contract. But there are still many locals with contracts already expired or in negotiations (Arizona, Indianapolis and Seattle) or coming up in the next few months (Denver, Chicago, Washington, Las Vegas and Northern California). So spreading the strike is both necessary and still possible.

However, instead of class struggle Trumka is heading up a "corporate campaign" to embarrass and morally shame the CEOs, while also trying to convince pension funds with large stock investments in Safeway and the other chains to pressure management to settle. This is a diversion which has served to alibi the union tops after they've run a strike into the ground. Many strikers will see *any* action called by the labor movement as an opportunity to press their demands, which can sometimes go beyond what the leaders have in mind. What's clear is that the union tops are feeling a lot of pressure from the base to do *something*, and that unionists know the strike is not over and they want to fight to win. This provides Marxists with the opportunity to say what needs to be done and *why* the bureaucrats aren't doing it.

Without money the strikers will become increasingly hard pressed. A recent AFL-CIO strategy session resulted in an initial pledge, according to Trumka, of over $600,000. Compared to what's needed, that's chump change: do the math, $10 per striker. Millions of unionists across the country would gladly see their dues go to win this strike. Now the L.A. longshore locals alone have donated $155,000 and promise to raise $1 million for continued medical benefits, which is a good thing and should be the beginning of much more to come to aid the strikers. But this too is a political question. The national AFL-CIO already has umpteen millions sitting in PAC funds designated for lobbyists and Democratic Party politicians who represent the class enemy. $56 million went for Gore in 2000. Who knows how much is socked away this year for the Democratic candidate? In California alone, the state federation of labor dumped millions into former governor Gray Davis' anti-recall campaign. So the money is *already* there—but will it be used for class collaboration and capitalist electoral politics, or will it further the class struggle and help win this strike?

Militant tactics and even a broader national strike strategy are not a guarantee of victory, even if the grocery strike were led by class-struggle Marxists. But class struggle is the only way workers have won—or held on to—significant gains. The problem is that the present union leaders consciously restrict their aims, and therefore their tactics, to what is acceptable to the capitalists—even when they occasionally do win a strike.

Canada: Auto Workers "Hot Cargo" in Support of Rail Strike

TORONTO, February 29—Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) members in Southern Ontario auto plants showed the kind of militant solidarity that's needed to win labor's battles. On February 20, 5,000 mechanics, cargo loaders and clerical workers at Canadian National Railways (CN), who are also organized by the CAW, launched a national strike. Three days into the walkout, workers at three Ford plants in Oakville and St. Thomas refused to handle parts being shipped on CN trains. Production was disrupted for two days until management stopped trying to use the trains.

The "hot cargo" action spread to a Ford plant in Windsor, where CAW members refused to load finished engines onto CN trains. DaimlerChrysler reported that shipments of truck frames from a Milton parts plant destined for a U.S. assembly facility were also disrupted. In Oshawa, General Motors was forced to store thousands of completed vehicles on company parking lots when it was unable to ship them out. The union's *Railfax* strike bulletin (February 24) reported how GM "spent most of the day scrambling to find trucks to deliver autos from its three assembly plants in Oshawa because of the rail strike." It added: "Special thanks go out to CAW auto workers who placed themselves at risk yesterday in order to support their striking brothers and sisters at CN Rail."

Ford is estimated to have lost $18 million from the February 24 shutdown alone. Refusal to handle struck goods, sympathy strikes and other militant actions at the point of production are key weapons in labor's arsenal because they stop production and cut off the capitalists' source of profit. Such examples of labor power are a thousand times more effective than all the "corporate campaigns," consumer boycotts and other no-win tactics typically promoted by the union bureaucracy.

International Women's Day Forum

Stop Bipartisan Attack on Women's Rights!

Free Abortion on Demand!

Speaker: Karen Cole, Workers Vanguard *Editorial Board*

Tuesday, March 9, 8 p.m.

Columbia University, Hamilton Hall, Room 603
116th Street and Broadway (Take 1 or 9 train to 116th St. stop)

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NEW YORK

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

South Africa: Workers Struggle Against ANC Neo-Apartheid Rule

Saturday, March 13, 3 p.m.

Britannia Community Centre, 1661 Napier Street (off Commercial Drive)

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VANCOUVER

On the other side of this battle, the supermarket owners are *totally* committed to *their* class interests. And the issues in this grocery strike—health care, pensions and the attempt to force two-tier wage takebacks—have important implications for the rest of the bourgeoisie. They will quickly unite to demand strikebreaking intervention by *their* government if faced with hard working-class struggle. So workers need to be *politically prepared* for what they are up against.

The Class Nature of the Capitalist State

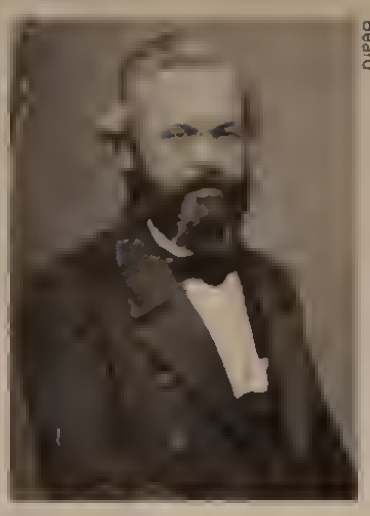
A *BusinessWeek* article a few years ago reported that the number of workers who would join a union if they could has doubled since 1984. If even half of those were unionized, organized labor would represent 35 percent of the workforce, the same share as its peak in 1945. This would cost employers *hundreds of billions of dollars* in increased wages and benefits. That's why union-busting is a billion-dollar industry and it's what the capitalists are looking to do in this grocery strike.

Trumka, who was one of the main advocates of the "corporate campaign" strategy during a string of losing strikes in the 1980s, said in a recent interview, "We have our work cut out for us, but I predict that three months from now, there will be a whole different attitude out there" (*Los Angeles Times*, 20 January). Well, the real question is: three months from now, what will have happened to the strikers out there? Workers and their allies need to understand the history and real treachery underlying the "corporate campaign." When Sweeney and Trumka took over the leadership of the AFL-CIO in 1995, they promised to bring back the "militancy" of labor's past. But in fact what they meant was not the powerful strike struggles that built the unions in the 1930s, but instead civil disobedience tactics and "corporate campaigns" appealing to the capitalists' "moral conscience"—mass rallies with preachers and Democrats instead of mass picket lines to shut down production, pacifist civil disobedience instead of sit-down strikes, consumer boycotts instead of secondary labor boycotts by transport workers who declare struck goods "hot cargo."

Epitomizing this layer of "corporate campaign" bureaucrats is AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Richard Trumka, the former head of the United Mine Workers. What's his history? Trumka entered the UMW bureaucracy on the coattails of Arnold Miller, who was elected through a Labor Department-supervised election in 1972. As the government's and Democratic Party's man in the union, Arnold Miller later betrayed the historic 110-day miners strike of 1978. To distance himself from the despised Miller, who was forced to resign in 1979, Trumka went back to the mines, cultivated a machine, and was elected president of the UMWA in 1982. He went on to perfect the art of keeping his historically militant membership hogtied by bowing to every rule in the bosses' strikebreaking arsenal. With a lawyer's flair, he worked his way up the AFL-CIO bureaucracy by mouthing support for "civil disobedience" while calling off mine occupations, like at Pittston's Moss No. 3 Plant in 1989, and letting strike militants like Jerry Dale Lowe be jailed. (See "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!" *WV* No. 814, 21 November 2003.) After two decades of such government-orchestrated "democracy," the Mine Workers are now a shadow of a once-powerful union.

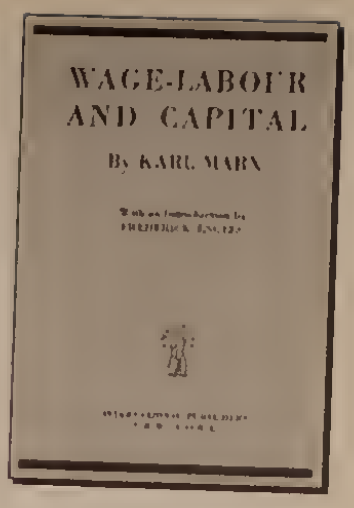
"Corporate campaigns" have been the death knell for hard-fought strikes ranging from the Hormel strike of UFCW meatpackers in 1985-86 to the Detroit newspaper strike in 1995. One Detroit strike activist at the time pointedly asked: Why do strike leaders think it's OK to illegally sit in the roadway and get arrested but not to illegally build mass pickets and stop the scabs? (See *WV* No. 632, "Labor: Stop Playing by the Bosses' Rules!".) It's not about legality per se—there's a political reason the bureaucrats bow to the bosses' laws against effective strike tactics.

Civil disobedience is particularly suited to their aims because it is an impotent moral appeal to the capitalists and respectable "public opinion" which



Beard

Karl Marx, founder of scientific socialism, explained nature of capitalist exploitation in his 1849 work, *Wage-Labour and Capital*.



avoids any working-class threat to the capitalists' property rights and prerogatives. The pro-capitalist union bureaucrats do not want to unleash labor's social power, for fear that in the course of struggle the working class might challenge the framework of capitalism. For example, writing about the explosive sit-down strikes of the 1930s, the Bolshevik revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky noted in the 1938 Transitional Program: "*Sit-down strikes*...go beyond the limits of 'normal' capitalist procedure. Independently of the demands of the strikers, the temporary seizure of factories deals a blow to the idol, capitalist property. Every sit-down strike poses in a practical manner the question of who is boss of the factory: the capitalist or the workers?" This is the question writ large that the trade-union bureaucrats, who now consider strikes passé, want to avoid. It's ultimately the question of capitalist reform vs. workers revolution.

The turn of the century American socialist and labor leader Daniel De Leon described the conservative trade-union leaders as the "labor lieutenants of capital." Their aim is not the elimination of capitalism, but to "make capitalism work"—which is a common liberal view in America. If certain capitalists just weren't so greedy, we could all get along. The capitalists are typically divided into "good" and "bad" actors: whether it's parasitic financiers vs. productive industrialists, or the 1980s version of Wall Street raiders vs. "warm-hearted" factory owners fighting off hostile takeovers, or the current "socially responsible" local companies vs. supposedly all-powerful international corporations beholden to no one. Or, in this strike, the "good" Kroger CEO vs. the "bad" Safeway CEO. In all these cases, the proponents of reforming capitalism make a qualitative distinction between different capitalists that doesn't really exist. Capitalism is based on a system of production in which maximizing profit, through the exploitation of labor, is the goal. Since profit is derived by paying workers less in wages than the value they add to a product or a service through their labor, with the "surplus value" being pocketed by the capitalist, the most basic way to increase profits is by lowering wages.

The trade-union tops demand a "fair" wage, but wages are not determined by fairness. Capitalists seek to drive wages toward the minimum amount needed to keep the workers physically and mentally able to do the work, as well as raise the next generation. Workers inevitably resist and seek better terms of exploitation, which is why they form unions. The terms of capitalist exploitation—also known as wages, benefits and working conditions—are ultimately determined by the class struggle, which is what today's union leaders wish to avoid.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Haiti...

(continued from page 1)

by the violent advance of a motley opposition comprised of former supporters and former opponents of Aristide. When Aristide was ousted in 1991 by Raoul Cédras (a graduate of the infamous U.S. military "School of the Americas" a/k/a "School of the Assassins"), some 70,000 desperate Haitians fled in rickety boats, while several thousand left behind were killed in the streets. The refugees were arrested by the U.S. Coast Guard, imprisoned for *years* at the U.S. military base in Guantánamo, Cuba and detention centers in the U.S., and then deported back to political repression and poverty in Haiti.

Clinton re-installed Aristide at the point of bayonets in 1994 in large part to stop the flow of Haitian refugees. Today's invasion by the U.S. Marines is again mainly motivated by the domestic agenda, that is, racist anti-immigration policies. No huddled, desperate black masses yearning to be free will be permitted to come ashore Bush's America. The prison camp in Guantánamo has been readied in anticipation of countless Haitians the U.S. will intercept on the high seas and throw in jail. The U.S. invasion of Haiti is also a danger to the Cuban deformed workers state, as well as to the militant proletariat of the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. We demand: *U.S. out of Guantánamo! Defend Cuba! Asylum for the Haitian refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

While the White House hesitated, it was the Democrats of the Congressional Black Caucus who demanded that U.S. Marines be sent to Haiti. Thus, these black front men for U.S. imperialism prove themselves to be the enemy of the

AP

U.S. military policeman brutalizing man during 1994 occupation of Haiti, ordered by Clinton White House, that restored Aristide to power.

black masses—here in the U.S. and in Haiti—by fostering illusions that this government, which viciously oppresses labor, black people and immigrants, can act in the interests of the downtrodden anywhere. ***Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party!***

When Aristide took power in 1991, we warned: "Aristide will either play the role of groveling instrument of the Haitian bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialist overlords or he will be swept away in a reactionary crackdown aimed at decisively disciplining the pitilessly oppressed population" ("Haiti: Election Avalanche for Radical Priest," *WV* No. 517, 4 January 1991). Aristide did *both*.

Initially, Aristide irked the U.S. by resisting their economic diktats and establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba. Then, after he was toppled in 1991, Aristide proved his reliability to his U.S. overseers by agreeing in advance of his return to power to a drastic austerity program, privatization of state-owned industry, massive layoffs in the public sector and the virtual abolition of import tariffs. The latter induced the collapse of the indigenous economy as the market was flooded with, for example, American rice at prices cheaper than the Haitian-grown product. Having dissolved the army (a center of his opposition) in 1995, Aristide propped up his rule with a brutal police force and gang terror.

The Bush administration, citing election fraud in Haiti in 2000 (which takes *chutzpah*—remember the Florida "chads" of 2000?) drastically slashed foreign aid to Haiti, even blocking previously approved loans from the Inter-American Development Bank for improvements in education, roads, health care and the water supply. In short, the Bush administration plunged what was already the poorest country in the Western hemisphere and one of the most malnourished populations in the world into a living hell. Yet Aristide demonstrated to the workers and the poor that his loyalty was not to them but to the White House and IMF. One of the few benefits from the Aristide regime was that his diplomatic ties to Cuba meant that over 500 Cuban doctors and nurses have been working in Haiti. As a letter to the *New York Times* (2 March) points out, "In the provinces, where most Haitians reside, Cuban doctors and nurses outnumber the Haitian medical personnel." These crucial medical teams will most likely be thrown out of the country by whoever the U.S. installs to run Haiti.

For 200 years, the Haitian masses have been paying in blood for the successful slave revolt and the defeat of Napoleon's army. A perceptive article by Gary Younge, "Throttled by History," (London *Guardian*, 23 February) notes:

> "'Men make their own history,' wrote Karl Marx. 'But they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under given circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past.' From the outset Haiti inherited the wrath of the colonial powers, which knew what a disastrous example a Haitian success story would be. In the words of Napoleon Bonaparte: 'The freedom of the negroes, if recognised in St Domingue [as Haiti was then known] and legalised by France, would at all times be a rallying point for freedom-seekers of the New World'."

In return for international recognition and to compensate France's former slave-owners, Haiti was compelled to pay 150 million gold francs—approximately 18 billion dollars at today's prices. By the end of the 19th century, 80 percent of Haiti's national budget was going to pay off its former exploiters, and the country remains a hideously impoverished debtor nation today. The French imperialists, who first enslaved the Haitian people, gave asylum to the hated Duvaliers, and demanded the ouster of Aristide, have the gall to posture as "saviors" of Haiti today. *Le Monde*'s lead editorial on 1 March, headlined "Help Haiti," concludes with a pious chastisement of failed American policy, and ominously intones, "What is necessary is a continuous presence under a renewed UN mandate."

The bitter truth is that the desperate conditions of Haiti today cannot be adequately resolved *within* Haiti, where the economy is so destitute that there is barely a working class. Social power lies in the hands of the North American proletariat, including its important Haitian component in Miami, New York and Montreal, as well as their class brothers and sisters throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. To put an end to the cycle of puppet dictators in Haiti, it is necessary to defeat the imperialist puppet masters and sweep away capitalist rule from Port-au-Prince to Wall Street! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Young Spartacus

Outrage Against Racist "Bake Sale" at Columbia U.

Campus Right-Wingers Target Black Students

Above: SYC speaker at February 26 protest organized by Columbia University Concerned Students of Color against racist provocations on campus.

NEW YORK, March 1—In a calculated racist provocation during Black History Month, the Columbia College Conservative Club (CCCC) staged an anti-affirmative action "bake sale" in Lerner Hall, the student center, on February 5. This "bake sale," which peddled baked goods to Jewish, white, Asian and male students at higher prices than to black, Latino and female students, was a sneering message to minority students that in the eyes of these right-wingers, they do not belong. Underlining the insult, the CCCC's "bake sale" coincided with the Columbia Center for Career Education's Diversity Recruiting Conference, a jobs fair for minority students. This provocation sparked outrage among hundreds of minority and anti-racist students who have organized silent vigils, overflowing meetings and speakout protests on campus. Nearly four weeks after the "bake sale," the campus remains a hotbed of justified anger. A militant, mass, integrated protest on campus would make the racist yahoos think twice about spewing their filth.

Young Spartacus

Racist provocations like that of the CCCC are part of a crusade to dismantle those gains of the civil rights movement that remain. A February 11 Spartacus Youth Club statement on the "bake sale" noted:

> "At Columbia University, where the black population is fairly small, the CCCC attempted to heighten racial divisions between students by promoting the lie that black students in this country are given a free ride.... While black students are under siege nationwide, the CCCC aims to drive black students off campus at Columbia."

There has been a right-wing onslaught on campuses nationwide, both at state schools and elite private ones. Since the beginning of 2003, College Republicans and other conservative groups have held racist anti-affirmative action "bake sales" at schools across the country, including UCLA, UC Berkeley, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Texas at Austin, Northwestern University and Boston University. The "bake sales" have grown in number following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling last year, which did not go far enough for the right-wingers in gutting such affirmative action programs as still exist. In mid-February, the College Republicans at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island took this racist offensive a step further by presenting a $250 "student of non-color, caucasian descent (white)"-only scholarship at a lecture they sponsored on "How the Civil Rights Movement Destroyed the Black Community."

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Full Democratic Rights for Homosexuals!

For the Right to Gay Marriage!

SAN FRANCISCO—The newly elected Democratic Party mayor of San Francisco, Gavin Newsom, set off a political firestorm when he ordered the county clerk to begin issuing same-sex marriage licenses on February 12. In search of a symbolic recognition of equality and the ability to partake in the multiple entitlements currently only granted to heterosexuals who marry—from pension benefits to hospital visitation rights—3,400 gay and lesbian couples married in the last two weeks. The first license was issued to Del Martin, 83, and Phyllis Lyon, 79, partners for 51 years and the founders of the first national lesbian organization, the Daughters of Bilitis, in 1955.

The marriages defy a state initiative (Proposition 22) passed in 2000 that states: "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." Newsom, who barely defeated Green Party candidate Matt Gonzalez last December, has now cleverly co-opted much of Gonzalez' liberal base. So while the religious right howls in outrage, marriage mania has gripped San Francisco City Hall.

We communists are committed to full democratic rights for gays, and we welcome any legal advances that can be wrested from this cruelly bigoted society, including the right to marry. In a recent editorial "Civil Right or Regressive Politics?" a gay, black Oakland man wrote: "The fight is not about church weddings. It is for legal recognition—specifically, laws involving property rights." A person's marital status should be genuinely irrelevant and every individual should have the same rights and protections regarding health, home and children.

Days after Newsom's proclamation, President Bush said he was "troubled" by San Francisco's act of municipal disobedience. Spoofing Bush, a local comic strip ("Bad Reporter" by Dan Asmussen) ran a humorous and bogus *SF Chronicle* headline: "'Weddings of Mass Destruction' Found in San Francisco—Bush Targets Newsom as Critics Predict 'Queermire'." Bush is now calling for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union of a man and a woman, asserting that same-sex marriages defy "more than two centuries of American jurisprudence and millennia of human experience" (*SF Chronicle*, 25 February).

Among younger gays and lesbians, Bush's opposition to this basic democratic right has driven some to white hot rage and many to jump on the Democratic handwagon. But they should remember that it was Democrat Bill Clinton who signed the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, which enshrined marriage as the union between one man and one woman and blocked access to federal benefits for gay partners indefinitely. Both major Democratic presidential contenders, Senator John Kerry and Senator John Edwards, oppose same-sex marriage while also opposing a constitutional amendment to ban it.

Newsom's action comes on the heels of the Massachusetts court ruling last November sanctioning gay marriage. Together with Bush's proposed constitutional amendment, this issue is polarizing the country in the lead-up to the 2004 elections, much to the Democrats' dismay. Meanwhile, the Green Party mayor of New Paltz, a small college town in upstate New York, began performing same-sex marriage ceremonies on February 27; the Democratic state attorney general refused the request by Republican governor George Pataki to intervene to stop them.

California governor Arnold Schwartzenegger's first response came on February 20 when he ordered the Attorney General Bill Lockyer to take action against the SF city administration. Then on NBC's *Meet the Press* (February 22), Schwartzenegger conjured up the fantasy that "All of a sudden, we see riots, we see protests, we see people clashing. The next thing we know, there is injured or there is

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 822 | 19 March 2004

Break with the Democrats, the Other Party of War and Racism—
For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!

U.S. Out of Iraq!
UN Stay Out!

The article printed below is adapted from a Spartacist forum given by Workers Vanguard *managing editor Rosemary Palenque in Boston on February 21.*

It is now almost a year since the U.S. imperialists began their invasion of Iraq—a war that was opposed by working people around the world who rallied in their millions against this brutal, one-sided slaughter. While the U.S. war to unseat Saddam Hussein's regime was over relatively quickly, the war against the peoples of Iraq takes the form of a bloody colonial occupation today. But not all has gone as planned for the U.S. imperialist rulers—their occupation of Iraq has faced unabated opposition, with more American forces killed during the occupation than during the war. There are no exact figures for how many Iraqis have perished at the hands of the U.S. imperialists, given that the U.S. considers Iraqi lives too worthless to count, but there is no doubt that the number outstrips U.S. losses by orders of magnitude.

We in the Spartacist League call for all U.S. troops out of Iraq and the Near East now! We take a side with the peoples of Iraq against the imperialist occupiers. In a statement issued by the Spartacist League Political Bureau as the war began last spring, we stated: "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime." What we declared then remains true today: "Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe" (*WV* No. 800, 28 March 2003).

This was in sharp contrast to the organizers of the antiwar protests, who refused to stand for the defense of Iraq in the lead-up to the war. This is because their strategy was (and still is) to build a movement based on the broadest possible "unity," that is, a movement that reached out to primarily Democratic Party politicians who did not oppose the aims of the war, but the methods by which it was carried out.

Many participants in the antiwar coalitions and protests were rightly frustrated at their inability to put any dent in the U.S. war drive against Iraq, and there have been debates subsequently on how to more effectively oppose the occupation. However, what is currently on offer from the liberal organizers of coalitions such as United for Peace and Justice and International ANSWER is a continuation of the politics of the antiwar movement. This could be best encapsulated by the main slogan of the protests against the Republican National Convention later this year: "The World Says No to Bush!" Just as the war couldn't be stopped through mass displays of moral outrage and indignation, the horrors of U.S. imperialism trampling the globe won't be stopped by voting Bush out of office.

It is a welcome development that the Bush administration is in some real trouble over the exposures of its fabricated pretexts for the Iraq war and occupation, as more and more working people are realizing that it is they and their children who are being made to pay for an imperialist adventure sold to them on a mountain of lies. The war was touted as a war for the liberation of Iraq, and indeed the world, from the regime of Saddam Hussein. This nationalist butcher was a long-time client and main ally of the U.S. in the Near East until he fell out of favor by making a grab for Kuwait in 1990. At that point he became an all-purpose bogeyman for both Bush administrations as well as Clinton's. Hussein was supported by the U.S. imperialists when they knew he was massacring tens of thousands of Kurds and killing and imprisoning thousands of leftists, trade unionists and religious opponents.

Reuters

U.S. occupation forces terrorize the people of Iraq: Military policeman assaults man during protest in Karbala, July 2003.

Two U.S.-led wars and over a decade of UN sanctions, which killed over one and a half million people, have devastated Iraq's economy and infrastructure. Today most people in post-war Iraq have no electricity, potable water, basic medical care or jobs—unemployment is estimated at 70 percent. If life weren't already terrifying enough under such conditions, in occupied Iraq the rules of engagement are that U.S. troops can "use overwhelming force on any entity considered hostile, even if it does not represent an immediate threat and is near civilians." This was the rationale given by Lieutenant-General Sanchez, commander of allied forces in Iraq, last September for why U.S. soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division who killed eight Iraqi police officers in one incident, and shot a sleeping family of six in another, would not face penalties. There are over 10,000 detained by the occupation forces in Iraq today. As a lawyer with the Human Rights Organization of Iraq told the *New York Times* (7 March): "Iraq has turned into one big Guantánamo."

Following the criminal Madrid bombings of March 11, the shock and revulsion felt by millions in Spain turned to fury against the right-wing Aznar government as it became clear that the bombings were

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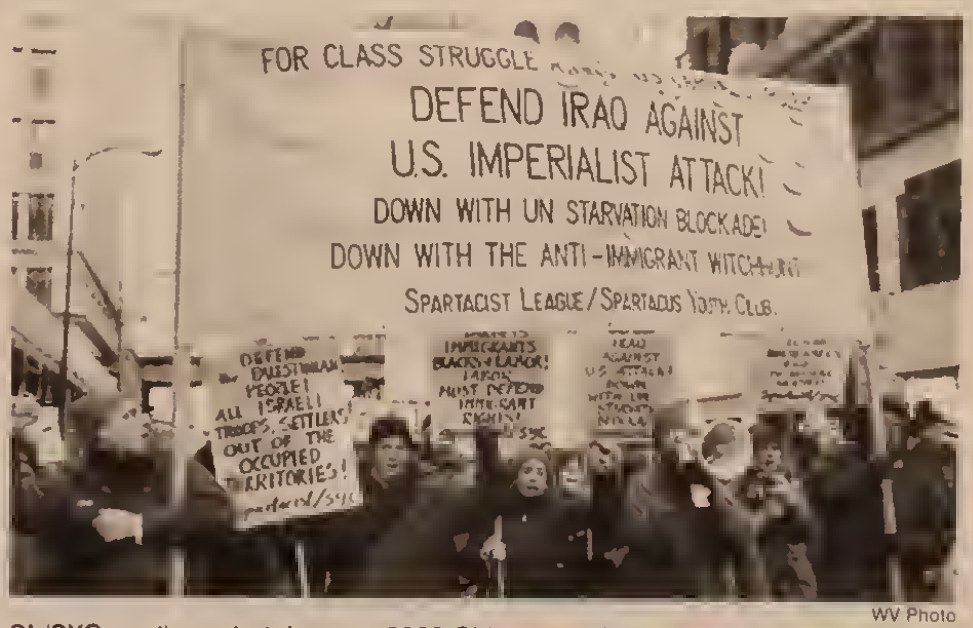

WV Photo

SL/SYC contingent at January 2003 Chicago antiwar protest.

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Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!

Greece: Down With State Terror!

Drop All Charges Against the Thessaloniki Protesters Now!

Indymedia UK

Greek cops attack protesters outside European Union meeting, June 2003.

In June last year, the Greek state orchestrated an attack against demonstrators protesting the meeting of the European Union leaders who had gathered in Thessaloniki to scheme to intensify the oppression, repression and exploitation of the working masses.

The Greek bourgeoisie showed its true face—sending its cops to tear-gas the demonstration and to attack demonstrators, beating them and carrying out arrests. More than 100 people were arrested, 27 of whom were held in custody. In some cases, felony charges were brought while others were charged with lesser offenses. Out of the blue, some of the offenses were changed into felony charges, and seven protesters were remanded to custody, facing false charges of rioting, possession of explosives and resisting authorities. Once again, the mask and pretenses of the bourgeois state have slipped.

Those arrested were Suleiman Dakdouk, a Syrian immigrant trade unionist, Carlos Martinez, a member of the Spanish trade-union federation, the CNT-AIT, Fernando Perez, Simon Chapman, Spiros Tsitsas and Michalis Traikapys and Dimitris Fliouris, who as minors were taken to Avlonas young offenders prison. The Greek bourgeois state again used fabricated evidence. As was shown by the cameras of Thessaloniki state TV station ET3, the cops who arrested Simon Chapman replaced his bag with another, containing Molotov cocktails.

We condemn this frame-up. This is an act of state terrorism which targets the workers movement and all those who dare to oppose capitalist exploitation. An injury to one is an injury to all! We demand the immediate release of the Thessaloniki demonstrators.

Once arrested, even though five of them had their police identity cards with them, they were handcuffed and taken to the cells of the security police of Thessaloniki for identification. There they were beaten by police in the expert way that leaves no marks that can be traced by forensic doctors, while the anti-racist material found on them was deemed "suspicious." At the same time they were forbidden access to their defense counsels, who on several occasions didn't know where they were being held. Those arrested were beaten and tortured many times. Against the illegal arrests, the inhuman conditions of detention and the "sentence of punishment of the whole movement" (as Suleiman Dakdouk denounced it), they began a hunger strike which five of them continued for two months until their temporary release.

After protests in Greece and abroad and after more than five months of imprisonment, they were temporarily "freed" until a trial date is fixed where new charges may be brought. Their freedom is restricted; they are forbidden to leave the country or the area in which they are resident. In February of this year, Simon Chapman was released, while charges against the rest still stand and the prosecution proceedings continue. According to the Greek Communist Party (KKE) daily *Rizospastis* (14 February), two more individuals, Timor Pundrusniak and Epaminondas Vasilias, have also been charged with crimes. During his stay in the hospital, Carlos Martinez was tortured with hands cuffed behind his back, naked, and every time he tried to sleep he was beaten on his hands and feet.

The anarchist protesters who protested the symbols of capitalist exploitation in Thessaloniki have their heart in the right place. All our sympathy is with the self-sacrificing demonstrators, even if we don't share their political outlook.

On the pretext of the preparations for the Olympic Games, the Greek state is heightening repression and oppression, imposing their capitalist "law and order" against the left, anarchists, immigrants and the whole workers movement. At the same time that Athens has been transformed into a giant building site, construction workers are in a strong position in that they have the power to shut down all the sites. That could be the beginning of a mobilization in defense of immigrants, who are a large component of the workers in construction.

Suleiman Dakdouk, an elected official of the builders union of Rethimnos, an immigrant, persecuted for years by the Greek police for his trade-union activities, found himself after his arrest in immediate danger of deportation to Syria where he was also persecuted for his political activities. The new "prosecution of illegal immigrants" police corps, which terrorizes immigrants, makes clear in an ever more violent way the real intentions of the bourgeois state. This was former ruling party PASOK's law "against discrimination."

The builders union must mobilize all construction workers for the defense of Suleiman Dakdouk. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants. We also defend the seven trade unionists of P.A.M.E (a trade-union organization in which the KKE plays a leading role) who were given suspended prison sentences in October 2003 following their occupation of the Labor Ministry during a protest in April 2001.

In the last year, more and more strikes have been declared illegal and "excessive." Workers are threatened with layoffs and some are prosecuted. We stand on the side of the land technicians, the IKA Institution of Social Security doctors, the POE-OTA local council workers, the Olympic Airways workers whose strikes were illegalized, as we stand on the side of all strikers.

We revolutionary Trotskyists seek to mobilize the power of the multiethnic proletariat in class struggle, not simply in protests against the capitalist system, but to uproot it. We fight for the forging of Leninist vanguard parties as part of a revolutionary international, which is necessary to lead the working class to sweep away the capitalist exploiters and their states and to build workers states and a worldwide egalitarian socialist society.

An injury to one is an injury to all!

We demand the immediate dropping of all the charges against the demonstrators, trade unionists and strikers.

Down with the anti-terror witchhunt!

For a Leninist vanguard party! ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

The Capitalist State Cannot Be Reformed

Particularly as the full presidential election approaches, the illusion is continually being reinforced that the American capitalist state can—through reform or the election of "pro-labor" candidates—be made to represent the interests of working people and the oppressed. In a 1920 appeal to the American syndicalist organization, the Industrial Workers of the World, Gregory Zinoviev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist International founded by Lenin, underlined that the working class needs its own state.

The war and its aftermath have revealed with startling clearness the real function of the capitalist state, with its legislatures, courts of justice, police, armies, and bureaucrats.

The state is *used* to defend and strengthen the power of the capitalists and to oppress the workers. This is particularly true in the United States, whose Constitution was framed by the great merchants, speculators, and landowners with the deliberate purpose of protecting their class interests against the majority of the people.

At the present time the government of the United States is openly acting as the weapon of the capitalists against the workers....

Any worker can see this fact with his own eyes. All the people vote for governors, mayors, judges, and sheriffs; but in time of strike the governor calls in the militia to protect the scabs, the mayor orders the police to beat up and arrest the pickets, the judge imprisons the workers for "rioting," "disturbing the peace," and the sheriff hires thugs as deputies to break the strike.

Capitalist society all together presents a solid front against the worker. The priest tells the worker to be contented, the press curses him as a "Bolshevik," the policeman arrests him, the court sentences him to jail, the sheriff seizes his furniture for debt, and the poorhouse takes his wife and children.

In order to destroy capitalism, the workers must first wrest the state power out of the hands of the capitalist class. They must not only *seize* this power, but *abolish the old capitalist apparatus entirely*.

For the experience of revolutions has shown that the workers cannot take hold of the state machine and use it for their own purposes—as the Yellow Socialist [i.e., social-patriotic] politicians propose to do. The capitalist state is built to serve capitalism, and that is all it can do, no matter who is running it.

And in place of the capitalist state the workers must build their own *workers' state*, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

—Gregory Zinoviev, "Appeal to the IWW," *The Communist International in Lenin's Time: Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920*, Vol. 2 (Pathfinder Press, 1991)

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

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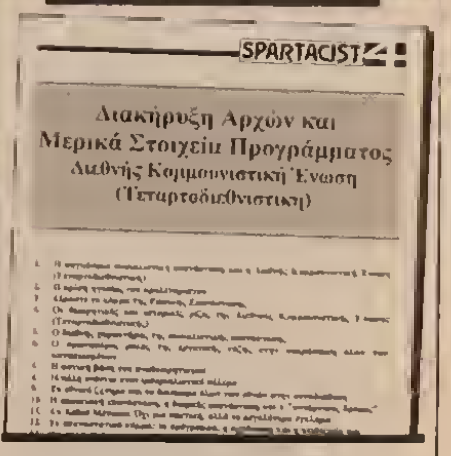

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Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire

AP

Al Sharpton has been exposed as a pawn for the Republicans, and now he is in hot water with the liberal and Democratic Party-loyal "left" whose crusade is "anyone but Bush" in the White House. According to the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice*, Sharpton's campaign strategist and financier is one Roger Stone, a Republican Party specialist in "dirty tricks." On January 25 the *New York Times* reported that Sharpton was working closely with Stone, described by the *New Republic* in 1985 as "the State-of-the-Art Washington Sleazehall"—or "a Reagan Republican," as he described himself. Then muckraking reporter Wayne Barrett followed up with a devastating exposé in the 4 February *Village Voice*, "Sleeping with the GOP," which stated: "Roger Stone, the longtime Republican dirty-tricks operative who led the mob that shut down the Miami-Dade County recount and helped make George W. Bush president in 2000, is financing, staffing, and orchestrating the presidential campaign of Reverend Al Sharpton."

U.S. presidential elections are a cynical billion-dollar shell game, played every four years to give people the "choice" of which capitalist party will preside over

AP

Sharpton's campaign adviser, sleazy Republican hatchet man Roger Stone, with wife.

their exploitation. It's a measure of the intensification of racial oppression in this country that none of the main Democratic Party contenders even pay lip service to black rights. The electoral charade takes place against the real landscape of unprecedented and astronomical imprisonment of black people nationwide, of increased segregation in housing and schools, and a black male unemployment rate nearing 50 percent in New York City.

This bleak reality explains why so many black people support Al Sharpton—a self-promoting, cynical hustler, proven FBI fink and willing tool for Republican dirty tricks. But he's the only pretender to even talk about racism. The *Black Commentator* Web site noted, in "The Problem with Al Sharpton" (5 February): "We must ask why Al Sharpton emerged as a contender for national black leadership via the presidential primaries. The answer is simple, and should be deeply troubling: He was the only one to step forward.... Whites of all political persuasions denounced Sharpton as an opportunist and publicity seeker—as if they were telling black folks something we didn't know. But we desperately needed publicity, and an opportunity to be heard. Rev. Al seized the spotlight and shook things up, which was a lot better than nothing."

The *Black Commentator* is wrong: Al Sharpton is not "a lot better than nothing." To the degree Sharpton mentions the legitimate aspirations of the oppressed black masses it is to divert any effective struggle for these aspirations into the dead end of the Democratic Party. While not dropping out of his current campaign, Sharpton just announced his endorsement of John Kerry for president. We frequently hear the argument that you can't criticize Sharpton because that would play into the hands of the racist ruling class. To the contrary, we stand with Malcolm X who scathingly denounced the role of black front men for the capitalist parties. As he said in "Prospects for Freedom in 1965," "I just read where they planned to make a black cabinet member.... They're going to take one of their boys, black boys, and put him in the cabinet, so he can walk around Washington with a cigar—fire on one end and fool on the other."

To package himself as a "respectable" politician, Sharpton worked to keep a lid on anger over the cop killings of unarmed black people, like high school student Timothy Stansbury Jr., gunned down on the roof of his own building. Sharpton has virtually dropped all mention of victims of racist police terror, and says little to nothing about the racist death penalty and America's foremost political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal. Former Black Panther Dhoruba Bin Wahad said it well in 1990 shortly after his release from 17 years in prison on a COINTELPRO frame-up: "If someone told me in 1969 that an informer with processed hair could be considered a leader in the African-American community, I would have told them they were crazy. So when I stepped out and found things of that nature, I realized how desperate things have become in the black community."

Liberals Hate Sharpton for the Wrong Reason

Al Sharpton, along with everybody to the left of Attila the Hun, has regularly denounced the 2000 Florida electoral farce, which relied heavily on obstructing and invalidating black votes to get Bush into the White House. It was Roger Stone, walkie-talkie in hand, who personally directed mobs of right-wing Miami Cubans against the headquarters of the canvassing board, helping force an end to the recount. But, says Stone, "I like Al Sharpton." So, apparently, do a lot of slithery, sinister right-wingers. Sharpton supposedly supports "civil unions" for gays. Yet among Stone's friends and associates who made $250 donations to Sharpton's campaign to boost his contributions enough to get Federal matching funds was one Paul Jensen, a top Bush official who, according to Barrett's article, "has filed suits in 16 states seeking to defrock Presbyterian ministers who've 'violated their vows' by ordaining gays."

As for Stone himself, Florida was just another day's work. His original mentor was vicious redbaiting attorney Roy Cohn, Senator Joe McCarthy's attack dog during the 1950s anti-Communist witchhunts and one of the prosecutors responsible for sending Ethel and Julius Rosenberg to the electric chair. Stone was involved in 1972 in the CREEP (Nixon's "Committee to Re-Elect the President") sabotage plan against the George McGovern presidential campaign. Stone helped Oliver North with money for the Nicaraguan contras, the CIA's operatives who sought to overthrow the left-wing Sandinista government. He also worked with Lee Atwater (creator of the notoriously racist Willie Horton ads against Michael Dukakis during the 1988 presidential campaign).

Democratic Party liberals are incensed at Sharpton's association with and service to the Republican Party. We Marxists point out, however, that it is primarily illusions in the Democratic Party as a supposed "friend" of labor and minorities that are the main bond shackling the oppressed to their oppressors in this country. The right to vote was a cherished gain of the black freedom struggles in this country. Today Sharpton is flirting with the very right-wing forces that would overturn that right and every other hard-fought gain by labor and the oppressed.

Sharpton: A Bipartisan Hustler

Sharpton has always been a cynical hustler, no stranger to the Republican side of the shady street of capitalist politics—and worse. In 1988 Sharpton, then known mainly as a local New York City activist preacher, was exposed in *Newsday* as an informant for the FBI. He began finking for the FBI in 1983, after being caught in a "sting" operation where he was videotaped during a cocaine deal with a narc posing as a South African businessman. Such dirty set-ups are typical of the political police of racist American capitalism. But Sharpton went along, admitting he let the Feds install a tapped phone in his home, that he carried a concealed microphone and even accompanied "wired" cops to meetings with people the Feds were trying to entrap.

And it wasn't just about drugs. As we pointed out in "The Case of Al Sharpton, FBI Fink" (*WV* No. 460, 9 September 1988): "[Sharpton] admitted that he finked on two black Brooklyn politicians, Congressman Major Owens and state assemblyman Al Vann, back in 1986 when the Reagan/Meese gang was investigating 'vote tampering.' At the time, Sharpton was working for Owens' campaign opponent, Roy Innis, notorious as a recruiter for the South African-backed UNITA terrorists in Angola." Innis not only recruited black Americans in 1975-76 for UNITA's CIA-funded rebels, but also for Uganda's bloody dictator, Idi Amin.

All this happened in NYC just as Mayor Koch and the NYPD were setting up a "Black Desk" (an updated version of the old FBI/NYPD "red squad"), planting informers in community meetings, tracking black militants and taping black radio station WLIB. Before he cleaned up his act to seek the "respectability" of bourgeois politics, Sharpton made his mark leading vile campaigns against Korean, Arab and Jewish shopkeepers. As we stated in our article: "Sharpton wasn't just wired—the man was a walking provocation. In 1986, he tried to whip up a pogromist backlash against Arab shopkeepers in Harlem (for supposedly selling drug paraphernalia). That same year he backed Reaganite Senator Alphonse D'Amato for re-election (while D'Amato was describing blacks living in housing projects as 'animals')."

While the liberals scream about Sharpton's collusion with the Republicans, the worst thing about Sharpton, from our viewpoint, isn't his cynical small-change politicking between two racist, anti-working-class parties. The worst thing, besides his sinister FBI collusion, is his decades-long work in trying to tamp down, divert and head off any attempts by militant blacks and working people to fight for their rights. When New York City exploded in mass protests over the cop killing of African immigrant Amadou Diallo in 1999, Sharpton rushed to corral these protests into electoral politics and a program for police "reform" to spruce up the image of these killers in uniform—including a pay raise for the police!

Sharpton's defense of KKK's "right" to march in New York City in October 1999 made headlines in black press in Britain.

Al Sharpton would rather see the race-hate terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan rally in NYC than a rally of blacks and labor, independent of the capitalist class, to stop them. In 1999, when we in the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee built a mass rally to stop the Klan from riding in NYC on October 23, Al Sharpton actually filed an *amicus* brief in court on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan's right to

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Spartacist League/SYC Forum

On the Civil Rights Movement: A Marxist Analysis

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LOS ANGELES

Labor Tops Sell Out Militant Supermarket Workers

UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America

We print below the conclusion of a January 31 Spartacist League forum given in Los Angeles by Steve Henderson on the recently concluded strike of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union in Southern California; Part One of this talk appeared in Workers Vanguard *No. 821 (5 March). The UFCW strikers waged a hard, determined class battle for five long months despite a series of betrayals by their trade-union tops. The workers returned to work in early March under a new contract that gave the supermarket bosses most of what they were gunning for, including the creation of a new two-tier system of wages and benefits. The responsibility for this defeat lies squarely at the feet of the trade-union bureaucracy. Although Henderson spoke before the outcome of the UFCW strike had been determined, he laid out the political lessons of the strike and proposed a way forward. Learning these lessons is crucial in order to prepare for and win future class battles, and particularly so for the 50,000 UFCW workers in Northern California whose contracts expire in July and September.*

PART TWO

How, if not through class struggle, do the trade-union tops propose to get workers a supposedly "fair" wage? I've already mentioned the "corporate campaign" moral appeals to stockholders. But more fundamentally, they look to the American government to police the capitalists and limit corporate "excess," and at the same time call for protectionist measures to make "their" national capitalists more competitive internationally so they can get some of the "trickle-down." In the eyes of the bureaucracy of the trade-union movement, the chief task lies in "freeing" the government from the clutches of the capitalists and pulling it over to their side. And they try to do this by demonstrating to the "democratic" state that they are "reasonable" labor statesmen and by showing in word and deed just how reliable and indispensable they are in peacetime and especially in time of war.

In reality, the government is not some neutral institution—it is the administrative organ and executive committee which serves the capitalist class. It runs the capitalist state—the bosses' repressive apparatus made up at its core of the military, the cops, the courts and the prisons—all of which enforce capitalist rule.

Unlike our reformist and liberal political opponents, ranging from the fake socialists of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) to liberal trade-union bureaucrats, we Marxists are for the complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. You can't successfully wage class struggle if the capitalist government is controlling your union.

WV Photo

5,000-strong UFCW strike rally and march in Los Angeles, December 2003.

The political expression of the reformists' reliance on the government is their support to pro-Democratic Party "lesser evilism." They argue that Bush and the Republicans represent "corporate greed" while the Democrats, while not perfect, can be pressured to represent workers, the oppressed and the poor. Much of the liberal mythology in America regarding the possibility of a caring capitalist government and a labor-friendly, "progressive" Democratic Party is based on self-serving lies about Roosevelt's New Deal administration, which is the liberals' model of social reform. AFL-CIO head Sweeney, for example, cites the New Deal as the example of fighting the good war abroad and lifting up working people out of poverty at home. So I want to briefly touch on what happened in the '30s and '40s.

New Deal: Labor's Coalition with Democrats, Dixiecrats

Roosevelt's paltry New Deal reforms were not enacted as return payment for the new CIO unions' electoral support, but to head off an extended period of increasing political radicalization and hard class struggle that brought millions of workers into organized labor. The major strikes of 1934 in Minneapolis, Toledo and San Francisco were all led by reds and paved the way for the later mass organizing drives of the 1930s. Roosevelt's labor laws were not a license to organize. Art Preis, a Trotskyist participant in those struggles, wrote:

> "What followed the signing of the NRA [the New Deal's National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933] was not the recognition of labor's rights but the most ferocious assault on American labor in its history.... Hundreds of workers were killed, thousands wounded, tens of thousands arrested or otherwise victimized from 1933 to 1938."
>
> — Art Preis, *Labor's Giant Step* (Pathfinder Press, 1972)

Minnesota Historical Society

Unionists battle strikebreaking cops and deputies during 1934 Trotskyist-led Minneapolis Teamsters strike.

So how did this workers upsurge which formed mass, integrated industrial unions become chained to a capitalist party? Central responsibility lies with the American Communist Party (CP). Following the Stalinists' turn to "popular front" class collaboration in 1935, the Communist Party union militants who had helped organize the CIO in the 1930s used their considerable political authority to channel this groundswell of class struggle into the dead end of the Democratic Party. Newly radicalized workers had to ask themselves: well, if even the reds are for Roosevelt, how bad can the Democrats be? By 1935, the CP had broken from its revolutionary origins and become a reformist party, seeking to influence a supposedly "progressive" wing of U.S. imperialism. This eventually led them to support the U.S. in World War II, including supporting the internment of Japanese Americans in camps, the no-strike pledge, and dropping the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was the Trotskyists who continued the fight to build a revolutionary proletarian party in this country, but the much larger CP had more social weight in the working class and their reformist politics by and large prevailed. So despite the great militancy of the CIO unions and the political opening for the creation of a workers party, bourgeois ideology was in the end strengthened within the labor movement through the New Deal alliance with the Democratic Party. And what was the result?

Support to Roosevelt meant a renunciation of not only class struggle but all social struggle against America's racist rulers. In America, where capitalism rests on the racial oppression of black people, labor struggle and black struggle will either march forward together, or fall back separately. And support to the New Deal was a betrayal of both. The New Deal put labor in an unholy alliance with not only its liberal class enemies in the North, but with Southern Dixiecrats, to whom Roosevelt gave free rein to wage naked racist terror against blacks *and* unions. Roosevelt's vice president from 1933-40 was John Nance Garner, a hardline white-supremacist from Texas, an "open shop" state where the union movement scarcely existed.

The New Deal alliance resulted in the crippling of subsequent struggles. In one crucial example, the CIO in 1946 announced a major campaign to organize the South, called "Operation Dixie." The task of organizing the South would have run head-on into "Jim Crow" segregation and the racist oppression of black workers. The necessary fight for integrated unions would have aroused a vicious backlash from Dixiecrats and their fascist auxiliaries in the Ku Klux Klan, in the process blowing apart the New Deal coalition. And amid the witchhunting atmosphere of the anti-Soviet Cold War, the CIO leaders feared the spectre of black workers joining with Communist labor organizers and scuttled "Operation Dixie" after only two years.

Following WWII, American capitalism was the only major imperialist power with its industrial infrastructure left intact, and thus emerged as the unchallenged military and economic power of the capitalist world. The largest strike wave in American history broke out in 1946 by workers seething at the wartime austerity for workers and wartime profiteering for the capitalists. In response, the American bourgeoisie, facing no capitalist competitors internationally and rolling in profits, could afford for some time to placate workers with regular wage increases and the promise of an American Dream. Simultaneously, the government orchestrated the postwar witchhunts which purged the reds from the unions and installed the Cold War anti-communist sellouts whose political heirs still run the unions today. The anti-labor laws which ban effective strike tactics, like the Taft-Hartley Act, were also passed at this time. The Cold War labor leaders ritually denounced these as slave-labor acts, but of course they always complied with them.

During the 1950s and early '60s the treacherous nature of the trade unions' pro-capitalist leadership was partly masked by the fact that American capitalism was still strong enough to raise living standards for a majority of the working class while maintaining a high level of

profits. American blacks, of course, never saw the short-lived American Dream—for them it was more the American nightmare. The courageous civil rights movement of the late '50s and early '60s finally defeated Jim Crow segregation in the South and eliminated formal legal inequality, but its liberal program could not overcome the racist oppression of blacks which is the bedrock of American capitalism North and South—the de facto discrimination in jobs, education, housing, health care, and the racist cop and Klan terror that enforces it. The trade-union bureaucracy was largely indifferent to the civil rights struggles in the South and actively hostile to the later black militancy which swept Northern cities, especially when it found expression among Detroit auto workers in the UAW. The bureaucracy's racist defense of the capitalist status quo further divided and weakened the American labor movement.

By the late 1960s—with its profits declining because of an aging industrial infrastructure, increased international competition and the inflationary effects of the Vietnam War—the American bourgeoisie no longer promised prosperity for anyone. The next decade brought stagnating wages followed by a major intensification of the rate of exploitation. Smashing the air traffic controllers union (PATCO) was the signal union-busting event of the 1980s Reagan years. The IAM machinists union, whose members serviced the airplanes, was uniquely situated to shut down the airports and defeat Reagan's frontal assault on the labor movement. But the head of the IAM, William Winpisinger, refused to pull the mechanics out.

It's no accident that, like John Sweeney today, Winpisinger was a prominent leader of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which is composed of pro-capitalist "socialists" operating within the Democratic Party. While such "labor statesmen" complained about Reagan's domestic policy, they fully shared his aims to foment capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. But the anti-Soviet war drive was necessarily combined with a war on labor and blacks at home. And the anti-communist union leaders routinely caved in the face of rampant union-busting. For the last several decades, the trade-union bureaucrats, continually acquiescing to what is "possible" and "practical" under capitalism, presided over the steady decline of organized labor and the increasing immiseration of workers and the oppressed.

For a Multiracial Revolutionary Workers Party!

I spoke of the labor movement's failure to organize the South back in 1946. Well, now the South is coming North after the unions. The grocery giants have all cited non-union Wal-Mart's low wages and benefits as the excuse to gut the UFCW. This is partly a negotiating ploy, since the "big box" stores are only projected to get 1 percent of the Southern California market share in retail food. But the fanatically anti-union corporations like the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart, now the world's largest retailer, *are* driving down wages and living standards everywhere. Labor needs to organize Wal-Mart workers, starting in those areas already unionized and extending the organizing drive to the South. Though today's union tops often speak at MLK Day assemblies and invoke racial equality, labor officialdom still disdains the hard class struggle it will take to organize integrated unions in the South, where "right to work" laws are backed up by racist Klan terror.

But it's not just in the South. When fascist skinheads attacked black and Latino grocery strikers last November, the union needed to organize picket defense guards, drawing in all of Southern California labor and the minorities and immigrants who bear the brunt of fascist terror. But the UFCW leadership did nothing. In the face of similar fascist provocations over the years in major cities, the SL and Partisan Defense Committee have initiated mass labor/black mobilizations—drawing on the social power of trade unions—to stop the KKK and Nazis. This is what a fighting labor movement led by a class-struggle workers party would do, championing the cause of all the oppressed, combatting every manifestation of anti-black racism and demanding full citizenship rights for all immigrants.

Organizing Wal-Mart will require the active defense of immigrant rights. Two weeks into the UFCW grocery strike, "Homeland Security" federal agents raided 60 Wal-Mart stores and rounded up more than 250 undocumented immigrant workers. We said: Free the rounded-up Wal-Mart workers! No deportations! But the UFCW leadership, which says it wants to organize Wal-Mart, has done nothing to mobilize the unions on their behalf. By rising to the defense of these immigrant workers, the UFCW would be mobilizing in defense of all Wal-Mart workers, undercutting the company's rabidly anti-union maneuvers and facilitating organizing efforts.

In 2000, the AFL-CIO finally dropped its opposition to a limited amnesty for immigrants, but it still demands government action to stop the flow of "illegals" and pushes protectionist poison, such as opposition to Mexican truckers, which ultimately targets foreign workers and immigrants. The UFCW, which has a relatively large immigrant membership concentrated in the food processing industry (much of which is located in the South), says it wants to organize all workers regardless of origin. But the union ludicrously wants the government's stamp of approval and complains: "Too often, it appears to workers that INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] is a partner, intentionally or not, with employers in the exploitation of immigrant labor and the suppression of workers rights. INS seems to show up more often during an organizing campaign or a strike situation" (UFCW Web site, "Where We Stand"). It doesn't just *seem* that way, it *is* that way. But the UFCW bureaucrats can't even say straight out that the INS is racist and anti-labor, because that would implicate *every* governmental enforcement agency that they rely on. And it would certainly expose the Sweeney bureaucracy's criminal policy of "organizing" the cops, prison guards and security guards who are paid to *repress* working people, immigrants and minorities.

Unfortunately, instead of union organizing, the bureaucracy's Wal-Mart campaign is based on poisonous appeals to protectionism. The labor misleaders blame cheap foreign labor and demand U.S. imperialist-enforced "labor standards" as a mechanism to invoke tariffs. In the case of Wal-Mart, the bureaucracy's tirades are directed mainly against mainland China. Wal-Mart is one of the largest buyers of China's growing export goods, which are largely produced in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by firms usually owned at least in part by outside capitalists. The AFL-CIO misleaders' anti-Communist China-bashing consciously serves the American bourgeoisie's counterrevolutionary crusade to fully open up China to capitalist exploitation and turn it into *one giant sweatshop*.

China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state where capitalism was overthrown as a result of the 1949 Revolution and whose core economy is still based on nationalized property. Just as workers defend their unions—despite sellout leadership—against the bosses, workers must defend China against imperialist-backed counterrevolution despite the Chinese bureaucracy's accommodation to capitalism. The American trade-union bureaucracy's hostility to China is based on visceral anti-Communism, with the added convenience of scapegoating a "foreign enemy" for the loss of American manufacturing jobs instead of fighting capitalism at home.

Most of the articles I've read on China's sweatshops are about foreign-owned factories in the SEZs. These private factories are deliberately conflated or confused with state-owned enterprises, with the assertion that China has gone capitalist or is heading to capitalism. But, in fact, China's fate has not yet been decided. The Chinese working class must sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. We stand for a proletarian political revolution—to defend and extend the gains of the workers state, i.e., the planned economy and collectivized property, while also placing political power directly in the hands of workers and peasants councils. This could inspire proletarian socialist revolution in the capitalist countries throughout Asia, including the industrial powerhouse of Japan.

A few of the more honest newspaper accounts tacitly concede that in fact collectivized property benefits China's workers and peasants. Here's a few quotes from a foreign correspondent for the *Washington Post*, comparing workers in the private factories to those in state enterprises:

> "They are more likely to work for private companies, often backed by foreign investment, with no socialist tradition of cradle-to-grave benefits."

And:

> "In private factories where migrants often work, managers are primarily concerned about profit. By contrast, despite new market pressures, managers of state factories in China often resemble political leaders, responsible for the overall welfare of their workers."
>
> —*Washington Post*, 13 May 2002

continued on page 6

Adama Press

William P Gottlieb

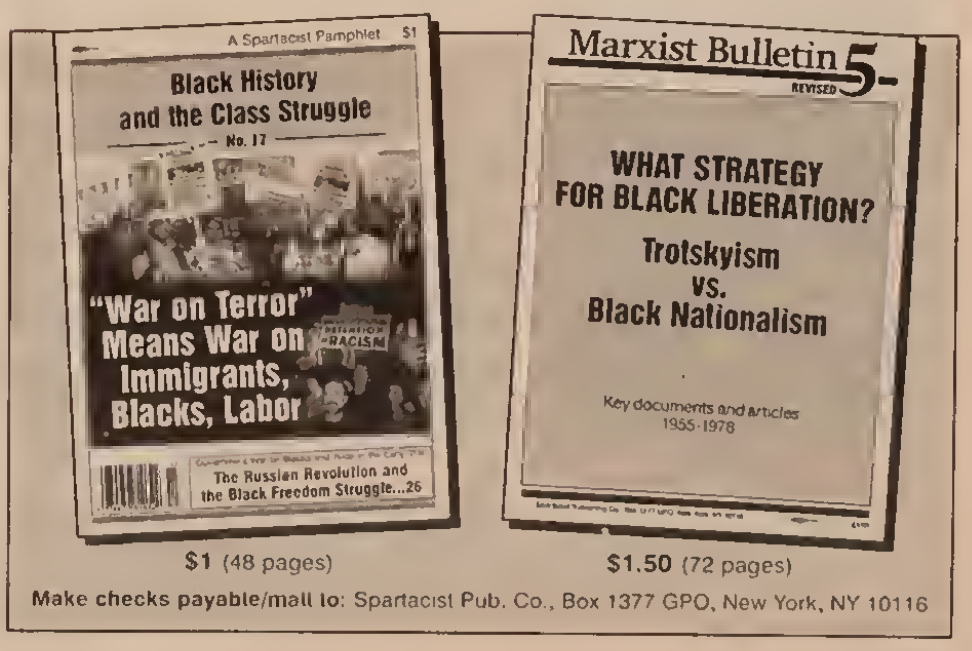
With outbreak of Cold War, bosses' press pushed anti-red scare. Right: Fighting breaks out at National Maritime Union meeting, 1950, where right-wing bureaucrats called cops against leftists as part of drive to purge Communists.

Bob Morris

Cops in riot gear arrest protesters outside Vons headquarters in suburban Los Angeles, January 21.

Sebastião Salgado

Immigrants rounded up along U.S./Mexico border. U.S. labor movement, with its vital immigrant component, must take up fight for immigrant rights.



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Spartacus Youth Clubs Raise Funds for UFCW Strikers

Young Spartacus

One month before the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) supermarket strike in Southern California ended, the Spartacus Youth Clubs undertook a fund-raising campaign to provide the workers some material aid and help them stay out on strike. We raised $1,837.71, motivating support for the UFCW workers at campus meetings, classes, newspaper sales and student rallies across the nation. Our campaign call was "Students: Take a Side! Support UFCW Strike! Donate Now!" The campaign was a way to broaden support to the striking workers and to "Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class!" as our SYC Ten-Point Program states. In California, the SYC also brought youth out to help walk the picket lines.

The campaign was no charity drive but rather an elementary act of solidarity with the workers. At a time when the capitalist ruling class in this country is engaged in an all-out offensive against the working people and the oppressed at home and across the globe, the workers of the UFCW were waging a struggle that sought to hit them back where it hurts—their wallet. Any victory for the working people against the union-busting of the bosses would mean a blow against U.S. imperialism.

Under capitalism, most youth face a future of no education and no jobs. The way forward is for youth to ally with the working class. At a February 23 protest at San Francisco State University against education funding cutbacks and the axing of a financial aid program for minority and poor students, an SYC speaker talked about the campaign and observed, "We must link our struggle to labor, who have the social power to tear down this capitalist system and replace it with a socialist society. Those who labor must rule!"

For many, the campaign was a break from the electoral politics offered by supposed "socialists" and the labor bureaucrats who recently sold out the strike. We sparked debate at a Students United for Peace meeting at Suffolk University in Boston when we condemned the Democratic Party during a presentation motivating the fund drive. The Democratic Party—the party of slavery and then Jim Crow, the party of Vietnam and the deadly sanctions against Iraq, the party that wants nothing more than to administer the occupation of Iraq and the "war on terror" at home—is a party of war and racism.

As an SYC spokesman said in a presentation about the UFCW campaign at a February 21 forum in New York titled "On the Civil Rights Movement—A Marxist Analysis":

> "Fundamental change does not come through elections. Gains for working people and the oppressed have only come through hard struggle. The working class needs a party that defends *its* interests. The only way these interests can be realized is through a socialist revolution, led by a workers party, putting the working class in power over an egalitarian, planned economy, and putting therefore the capitalists out of power. Youth, students, blacks, immigrants, women should ally themselves with this cause because a socialist revolution alone can lay the material basis for the elimination of exploitation, oppression, racism and war."

UFCW...

(continued from page 5)

> "Market reforms have undermined the socialist health care system that once covered 90 percent of China's population. In its place has emerged a jungle of a medical system in which many workers are receiving inferior care, at higher costs, with little or no insurance."
> —*Washington Post*, 4 August 2002

What the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats and their reformist apologists can't stand is that a collectivized economy with centralized planning—in which production is for human need, not for profit—is the real solution for the world's working people. Such an economy must be established on an international scale, particularly tapping the vast productive resources of the United States, Western Europe and Japan. Tiny Cuba, despite a decades-old U.S. embargo, has been able to provide decent health care to its population, resulting in an infant mortality rate on a par with that of the U.S. and Canada. In America, with its vast wealth and medical technology firmly in the grip of the capitalists, health care has become a crisis of epidemic proportions. As the rates of poverty and unemployment rise, the number of those without health insurance has grown to some 40-45 million nationally. At the same time, Medicare payments are being slashed and millions driven off the welfare rolls. Those not lucky enough to find job-based health insurance are one medical crisis away from a major family catastrophe. And with medical insurance premiums rising at a double-digit pace, this is the first thing employers want to cut.

The irrationality of capitalism is such that the basic needs of life are held hostage to profit. Medical care is denied to improve the capitalists' bottom line. Safeway/Vons CEO Steven Burd declared that the grocers' hardline stance slashing medical benefits and labor costs "is an investment in our future" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 October 2003). Well, working people need to fight for a future without capitalism. The only way that immigrants, blacks and all working people can be assured of free, quality medical care is to rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class and put it in the hands of those whose labor builds this society.

WV Photo
Spartacist supporter on UFCW picket line.

That's why we need a revolutionary workers party. As Lenin explained in *What Is To Be Done?*: "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness," a form of bourgeois consciousness which accepts the framework of capitalism and limits the struggles of the proletariat to questions of wages and working conditions. The labor bureaucracy is also the medium for the transmission of the social and political prejudices of the more backward layers of the working class. Socialist consciousness can only be brought to the working class from without, through the intervention of a Leninist party, a fusion of intellectual and proletarian elements, which aims to imbue the working class with a Marxist understanding of its historic mission of abolishing capitalism.

The trade-union bureaucracy is the chief obstacle to class struggle in the U.S. Through the instrument of the Democratic Party, they chain the workers to the capitalists and their state. In times of sharp class struggle or imperialist war, the labor bureaucrats become the open political police of the bourgeoisie in the labor movement. It is the task of the revolutionary party to educate the workers so that they can politically oust these misleaders and set the unions on the path of class struggle against the capitalists and their system. In fighting for a victory to the grocery workers strike, we hope you'll also draw the broader lessons of this struggle and join us in the task of building a workers party that fights for socialist revolution. ■

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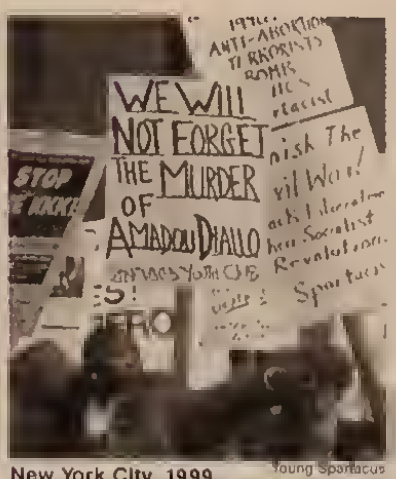

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Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

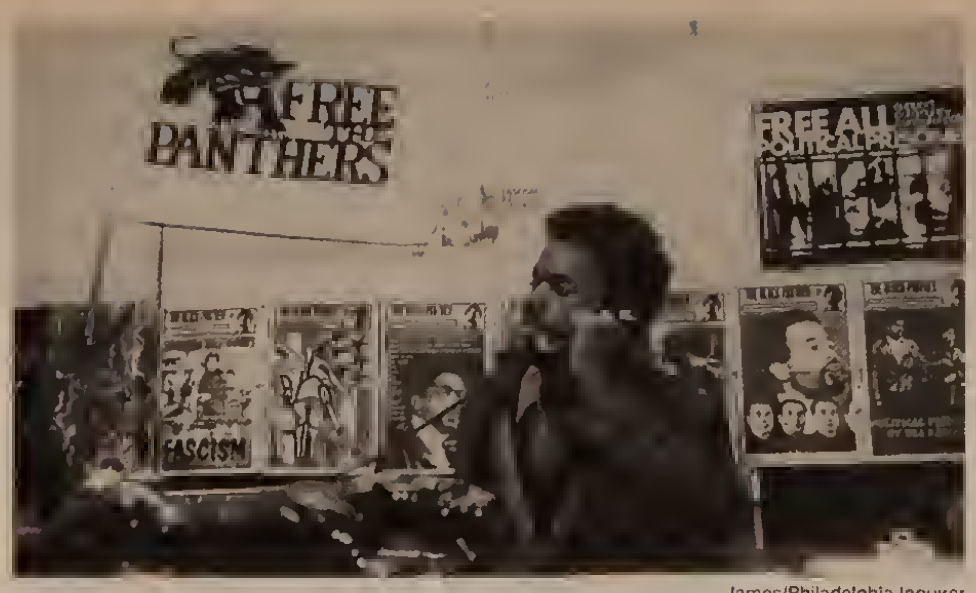
Jamal's death sentence while affirming his conviction, condemning him to a life of prison hell. Jamal's attorneys appealed that decision, seeking to overturn the conviction. The state appealed as well, seeking to uphold Jamal's death sentence. Jamal still sits on death row. His federal appeal is on hold while the Pennsylvania state court decision is appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lynch Law Justice

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is nothing but Texas lynch law justice—up North. Not only have the courts barred Beverly's confession, but they have rejected the evidence discovered only two years ago of the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried. In that conversation, Judge Sabo declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n----r." Last October, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court refused to even consider Maurer-Carter's testimony on the grounds that Sabo's bias had already been litigated and ruled upon in Mumia's 1995 PCRA (Post-Conviction Relief Act) appeal—before the same Judge Sabo, who exonerated himself of any racist animosity and prejudice toward Mumia!

Jamal's petition to the Supreme Court points out, "Where a judge in the trial of an African-American defendant expresses in ugly racist terms his intention 'to help 'em fry the n----r,' even the appearance of justice is not satisfied. To the contrary, such a trial is a sham. In the context of a case involving the death penalty, it is essentially a lynching party." Jamal's papers need only cite a handful of Sabo's numerous actions evidencing his bias: he denied Jamal's motion to remove a white juror who had stated he could not be impartial; he improperly removed a black juror; he barred Mumia from representing himself and took over questioning of prospective jurors; he permitted improper cross-examination of character witness Sonia Sanchez, a renowned poet who was smeared as a "friend of cop killers." The papers also cite the improper cross-examination of Jamal during the penalty phase of his trial. In this instance, Sabo encouraged the prosecutor's interrogation regarding Jamal's past membership in the Black Panther Party—a gross violation of Jamal's First Amendment rights of speech and association. The prosecution argued that Jamal's BPP membership proved he was planning to kill cops for the past 12 years.

The second ground cited by Mumia's petition is the refusal of Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice Ronald Castille to recuse himself from participating in that court's deliberations and last year's decision denying post-conviction relief to Jamal. Castille was the Philadelphia District Attorney from 1986-91, at a time when his subordinate Jack McMahon made an infamous videotape instructing members of the D.A.'s office on how to dismiss blacks from juries—as was done in Mumia's case. Jamal's petition states, "As District Attorney, he appeared in the appellate briefs that argued for the upholding of the conviction and Petitioner's execution, and supervised the successful effort to uphold the conviction and death sentence." As a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Castille joined in turning down Jamal's appeal of Sabo's denial of his PCRA in 1997. Jamal's attorneys highlight, "For the same person to function as both prosecutor and judge in a capital case violates the due process clause and mandates that the conviction be reversed."



James/Philadelphia Inquirer

Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1969 as Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panther Party.

Another example of Sabo's bias cited by Jamal's attorneys was his refusal to admit 600 pages of FBI files on Mumia. These files document over a decade of surveillance, harassment and frame-up attempts by the FBI's COINTELPRO terror operation—working in conjunction with the Philadelphia police headed by racist demagogue Frank Rizzo—aimed at "neutralizing" black and leftist militants. A 24 October 1969 FBI report urging that Jamal be placed under high-level surveillance noted:

> "In spite of the subject's age (15 years), Philadelphia feels that his continued participation in BPP activities in the Philadelphia Division, his position in the Philadelphia Branch of the BPP, and his past inclination to appear and speak at public gatherings, the subject should be included on the Security Index [list of those deemed a threat to national security]."

When Mumia told MOVE's side of the story following a bloody 1978 cop siege of their Powelton Village home, Rizzo fingered a "new breed" of journalists such as Jamal, who he threatened would one day "be held responsible and accountable for what you do." Three years later, on a dark Philadelphia street at four in the morning, the cops finally got the chance they'd been waiting for.

First as police commissioner and then as mayor, Rizzo ran the city for more than a decade as a local police state. In 1964, when the black ghetto in Philadelphia was one of the first in the U.S. to explode, the police set up the notorious Civil Defense (CD) squad, which worked with the FBI to infiltrate or spy on virtually every civil rights or political organization in the city. Lieutenant George Fencl, who headed the CD unit, boasted that "we have some 18,000 names" on file. Fencl's "counter-intelligence" program served as a model for the FBI's COINTELPRO operations against the Panthers and other black activists.

For those who scoff at the notion that Mumia's prosecution was a political vendetta and that the massive government surveillance of Jamal was not "relevant" to the trial, consider this interruption in the proceedings just as the prosecution's key witness, prostitute Cynthia White, was about to testify:

> "THE COURT: Just a minute. Fencl is on the phone.
> MR. McGILL: Off the record.
> (A discussion was held off the record.)
> THE COURT: Did you work it out?
> MR. McGILL: There's no problem."

As coached by prosecutor McGill & Co., White went on to falsely testify to seeing Mumia shoot Faulkner. Nobody on the scene remembered seeing White near the shooting. With a police record a mile long, and awaiting trial on three charges at the time of Jamal's arrest, White was particularly susceptible to police coercion. Veronica Jones, another prostitute who knew White, testified she was offered a deal similar to that given White to falsely testify against Jamal: "They were trying to get me to say something that the other girl said...and they told us we can work the area if we tell them." Sabo struck this testimony which went to the heart of White's credibility and police misconduct as "not relevant."

No Justice in the Capitalist Courts

From the moment a critically wounded Jamal was handcuffed to a hospital bed 22 years ago, court after court trampled on Jamal's constitutional rights, including making Jamal's case an exception to their own rules to keep him in the shadow of death. For example, the U.S. Supreme Court in 1990 refused to hear Jamal's petition for review of the initial Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision. The petition challenged the prosecution's use of his past membership in the Panthers in securing the death sentence. About a year later, the same court reversed the death sentence of David Dawson on the grounds that the prosecution improperly used his political affiliation as a member of the racist White Aryan Brotherhood to prejudice the jury.

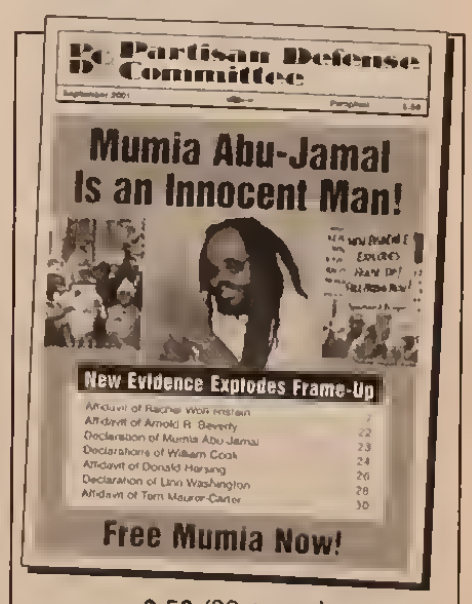
The "justification" used by both the federal and Pennsylvania state courts for slamming the door shut on Beverly's confession was that it wasn't submitted to the courts within the time limitations for newly discovered evidence set by recent laws to cut off death row appeals—Democratic president Clinton's 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and a 1995 Pennsylvania law. Adopted at a time when it was well known Jamal would soon be filing for post-conviction relief, the latter was explicitly intended to cut off Mumia's appeal rights. Nearly 150 years after the infamous Dred Scott decision, a fighter for black freedom like Jamal has no rights which the capitalist courts are bound to respect.

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq. Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery.

The death penalty is the ultimate sanction employed by this repressive system as it seeks to contain the explosive pressures generated by the growing gap between a handful of filthy rich and those on the bottom. The parties of capital, Democrats and Republicans, join in pushing racist "law and order" campaigns aimed at intensifying capitalist repression, including through the grotesque speedup on death rows across the country. As Marxists, we are unequivocal opponents of the death penalty, regardless of innocence or guilt; we do not accord the state the right to determine who lives or who dies.

We seek to mobilize working people, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in protest actions centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand Jamal's freedom. Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the bourgeois state, with its cops and courts, is not some "neutral" agency which serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit. Those who subordinate the call to "Free Mumia" to one for a "new trial" peddle dangerous illusions in the justice of the very courts which have repeatedly upheld the racist frame-up of this courageous fighter for the oppressed.

To put a final halt to the grisly workings of capitalism's machinery of death—be they the guardians of death row or the cops who operate as "judge, jury and executioner" in gunning down minority youth on the street—requires sweeping away this entire system based on exploitation and oppression. The social power to do that lies in the hands of the multiracial working class, with its numbers, organization and discipline—and most importantly, its capacity to bring the wheels of the profit system to a grinding halt. *Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!*■



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Sharpton...

(continued from page 3)

demonstrate. He joined with other NYC Democrats in setting up a counter "demonstration for tolerance" (for the KKK!), which the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) and other liberals endorsed (along with some NYC cops, with whom the ISO shared a platform). But thousands of New York City unionists, students and other leftists, such as Progressive Labor Party, came out to make sure, as one labor militant said, that "This is not Klan country!" (see "Labor/Black Mobilization Rides KKK Out of NYC," *WV* No. 722, 29 October 1999).

It's at best a cruel joke to imagine that Sharpton's loudmouthed stunts could bring one of the partner parties of American capital toward anything resembling a platform for black freedom. All the pseudo-militant rhetoric about forging an "independent black voting block" and hip-hop youth voter registration schemes obscures the hideous reality of black oppression in this country, where more young black men are in prison than in college. Many black "convicted felons" are effectively disenfranchised—they have no right to vote, and no bourgeois election will change the systematic racial oppression which is rooted in the whole rotten system of American capitalism.

The road to black freedom lies in the struggle to shatter this racist capitalist system through proletarian revolution. The power to do that lies in the hands of the multiracial working class. But that power cannot be realized unless a fighting labor movement champions the cause of black liberation and breaks the chains, forged by the labor bureaucrats and black front men for the Democratic (and Republican) Party, like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, that bind working people and the oppressed to the capitalist class enemy. The purpose of the Spartacist League/U.S. is to build a revolutionary internationalist party that will lead the struggle for the class rule of the proletariat. Break with the Democrats! For a multiracial, class-struggle workers party!■

Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

not the work of the Basque-nationalist ETA, as Aznar & Co. lyingly insisted. Reportedly, Islamic fundamentalists claimed responsibility for the attack as bloody retribution for Spain's participation in the Iraq war, which was opposed by 90 percent of the Spanish population. In a surprise upset, the social-democratic PSOE won the election, and the incoming Prime Minister Zapatero threatens to pull Spanish troops from Iraq if the United Nations does not go in. Meanwhile, Zapatero vows to pursue the "war on terror" with a vengeance, targeting the Arab immigrant population in Spain as well as the Basques. Zapatero seeks to deflect massive opposition to the Iraq war by swapping the blue helmets of the UN for the stars and stripes of U.S. imperialism.

In the U.S., many liberals like Ralph Nader and Democratic Party presidential primary candidates Dennis Kucinich and Al Sharpton advocate UN troops as a preferable alternative to the current occupation forces. Contrary to claims that the UN weapons inspection teams helped to stave off the war, they actually set a defenseless Iraq up for slaughter. The UN is nothing more than a den of imperialist thieves and their victims; it has served since its inception as a democratic fig leaf for imperialist slaughter, from the Korean War of the early 1950s that killed over three million people to the first Gulf War. We say: No to UN intervention! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq!

Imperialists Carve Up the Near East

In an article titled "Hold Bush to His Lie" (*Nation*, 23 February) popular anti-globalization author Naomi Klein wrote, "All of Washington's reasons for going to war have evaporated: the only excuse left is Bush's deep desire to bring democracy to the Iraqi people. Of course, this is as much a lie as the rest—but it's a lie we can use. We can harness Bush's political weakness on Iraq to demand that the democracy lie become a reality, that Iraq be truly sovereign." A stable bourgeois democracy in Iraq is a pure fiction, as revealed by the reactionary forces that have emerged under the occupation, from fundamentalists demanding a constitution based on Islamic law—against which many women in Iraq have protested—to

...neither does the International Socialist Organization, pandering to "anybody but Bush" sentiment.

monarchists and "democrats" who've long been on the CIA payroll.

More fundamentally, Iraq is not a nation but an entity carved out of the three major populations in the area by the British imperialists following World War I. These include the Kurdish north, the Sunni Arab center and the majority Shi'ite south (and various others), with each region further riven by clan and tribal rivalries. Under capitalism, "democracy" can only mean the domination of the Shi'ite majority over the Kurdish and Sunni Arab minorities. In such a society, the exercise of secular rule under capitalism is only possible under something like Hussein's Ba'athist dictatorship, which the Bush administration aspires to replicate—democratic

Corbis

U.S. prison camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Under "war on terror," prisoners are held indefinitely without charges.

rhetoric aside—cleansed of its Ba'athist elements and pliable to U.S. dictates.

Every blow aimed at the U.S. colonial occupiers, as well as their local army and police puppets, is in the interest not only of working people in Iraq, but in the Near East and throughout the whole world. We oppose any repression against those who take up arms against the occupation. At the same time, the communalist attacks against Shi'ites and Kurds (and others) are entirely criminal from the standpoint of the international proletariat and must be condemned. We do not lend one iota of political support to the remnants of the Ba'athist regime or the Islamic fundamentalist forces seeking to impose their own reactionary agendas on Iraqi women, workers, ethnic and religious minorities. Marxists seek to mobilize *proletarian* resistance against the occupation of Iraq using proletarian means of struggle (strikes, boycotting military goods, etc.) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against U.S. imperialism, not only in Iraq but internationally.

The Near East is a patchwork of nationalities and religions and ethnic groupings, with states whose boundaries were artificially drawn by the imperialists to suit their colonial appetites, including control of vital oil reserves. The struggle against imperialist domination and the oppressive rule of the sheiks, kings, colonels, ayatollahs, nationalist and Zionist rulers cannot be resolved under capitalism. There will be no end to ethnic and national oppression, no emancipation of women or an end to the exploitation of working people in the Near East short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions that open the road to the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East, as part of the struggle for international socialist revolution.

Among the opponents of the war and occupation many see a huge gap between the U.S. imperialists' rhetoric about freedom and democracy and what these same rulers do at home and around the world to working people and the oppressed. A graphic example in the Near East itself is U.S. imperialist support to the Zionist rulers in their onslaught against the Palestinian people—many of them now being walled in and walled off from any kind of livelihood while Zionist stormtroopers raze whole towns in the Occupied Territories. If anyone in the Near East possesses weapons of mass destruction it is certainly Israel, courtesy of the imperialists.

Whether or not to raise the call for defense of the Palestinian people and for an end to the Israeli occupation has been a major topic of debate among the organizers of the March 20 protests against the occupation of Iraq. This issue has been divisive because the more right-wing elements in these coalitions fear alienating Democratic Party politicians, who are staunchly pro-Zionist. We call for the defense of the Palestinian people and demand the withdrawal of all Israeli troops and settlers from the Occupied Territories. For both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples to equitably exercise their right to self-determination requires Arab/Hebrew workers revolutions to topple not only the Zionist rulers, but capitalist rule throughout the region.

Imperialism in the Post-Soviet World

A common view among many antiwar activists is that the Bush administration, which has well-known links to U.S. oil companies, simply wanted to get its hands on Iraqi oil. It is the beginning of wisdom to see that the U.S. imperialists had an economic motivation for going to war, but reducing it to that ignores the intent of U.S. imperialism, which was not merely to loot Iraq but to assert its *unique* right to do so against its main economic rivals, such as Germany and Japan.

The war was an assertion of U.S. military superiority and of its control over the Near East oil spigot on which both Japan and West Europe heavily rely. The intent was to "shock and awe" the U.S.'s imperialist rivals, who are militarily far weaker. In the absence of the destruction of imperialism through socialist revolutions, the economic conflicts between the imperialists can only lead to interimperialist wars, such as World Wars I and II, except this time fought by nuclear-armed powers. While at this time no single imperialist power has the ability to prevail militarily in a war against the U.S., things will not remain the same forever. The possibility of alliances between a combination of imperialist powers, down the road, represents a threat to U.S. hegemony.

There has been a lot of discussion, especially among anti-globalization activists, about a "new imperialism," which is not surprising given that the Iraq war and occupation empirically negate the ideology of "globalization"—the spoils are going to U.S. imperialism and no one else except on their say-so. Yet the false theory of globalization posits that capitalism has transcended the nation-state. So rather than big corporations being dependent on a particular state power to defend and further their interests, you have so-called multinational and transnational corporations. Supposedly, the world economy is actually controlled by international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization.

The fundamental workings of imperialism haven't changed since Russian revolutionary V.I. Lenin described them in his 1916 work, *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, where he stated that imperialism is "a struggle of the great powers for the economic and political division of the world." This struggle is based on international competition for cheap labor, raw materials and spheres of influence. The world economy is defined by this competition between the larger, more advanced nation-states which seek to defend the economic interests of their respective capitalist classes. A capitalist has to be able to defend his property rights with bodies of armed men—if you default on your mortgage, it's not a bank officer who comes around to throw you out, it's the police. The same operates on a larger scale and internationally—the imperialist military exists to defend the economic interests of the capitalists of an imperialist nation against their competitors.

The U.S.'s unrivaled military dominance today is the result of the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution over a decade ago. In contrast to most liberals and organizations on the left, who joined the imperialist powers in hailing the destruction of the Soviet Union, we fought to mobilize the working class against counterrevolution and warned that the destruction of the world's first and most powerful workers state, albeit degenerated and betrayed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, would be a defeat for working people around the world. This was not least because we understood that the U.S. imperialists, the biggest purveyors of death and destruction on the planet, would see no challenge to their appetites for global domination. They are now emboldened enough to announce "pre-emptive" war as official doctrine. The rape of Iraq today is in fact one of the grim consequences of the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state.

Chappatte/International Herald Tribune

Class Society and the State

Of all the lies working people are told by the government, the media and the education system, the biggest one is that they share any interest in common with the people who rule this country—and that doesn't just mean the Bush administration. It means the people who own the factories, mines, banks, industry—what Marxists call the means of production. It also means their representatives in the capitalist Republican *and* Democratic parties whose job is to administer the state so that nothing gets in the way of the capitalists' right to make and amass profit off the backs of working people here and around the world. The capitalists have cops, courts, prisons and an army—i.e., a state which exists to defend the capitalists and their property rights. The government of the United States is not "our" government, nor can it ever be so long as the system of capitalism remains in place.

One of the most fundamental aspects of capitalist society which is obscured by everyone from George Bush to liberals and especially anti-globalization ideologues is that this society is divided into two fundamental classes with irreconcilable interests. The interests of those who own the means of production cannot be reconciled with those of the working

Noam Chomsky: Radical Poseur

The article below is reprinted from Spartacist Canada *No. 140, Spring 2004, the newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).*

The featured speaker at the March 20 anti-occupation demonstration in Vancouver is Noam Chomsky, a self-styled "anarchist" whose writings and speeches are popular among radical youth. While Chomsky exposes some of the more bloody excesses of U.S. military and foreign policy, at bottom he is an ideologue for a more "just" and "democratic" imperialism.

In the buildup to the 1991 U.S. attack on Iraq, Chomsky (like the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party]) pushed as an "alternative" to war "the peaceful means prescribed by international law: sanctions and diplomacy" (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). The "peaceful" UN sanctions ***killed*** 1.5 million Iraqis. For years, Chomsky had also been prettifying as an "alternative" one Ahmed Chalabi, head of what he claims was Iraq's "democratic opposition."

A wealthy bourgeois politician, Chalabi is a U.S. stooge, head of the American-funded Iraqi National Congress and currently a prominent figure in the U.S.-run "Governing Council" in Iraq who rode into Baghdad with U.S. troops last April. (For more detail, see "Down With Colonial Occupation of Iraq!" *SC* No. 137, Summer 2003.)

For all his "exposés" of the U.S. rulers' crimes, Chomsky does not challenge the imperialist world order. Take, for example, his op-ed piece in the February 23 *New York Times* on Israel's "security wall," "A Wall as a Weapon." He rightly condemns the Zionists' attempt to "turn Palestinian communities into dungeons, next to which the bantustans of South Africa look like symbols of freedom, sovereignty and self-determination."

But while protesting that the wall's existing path grabs Palestinian territory, Chomsky opines: "Few would question Israel's right to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks like the one yesterday, even to build a security wall if that were an appropriate means." If the wall were built inside "the internationally recognized border," he continues, it "could then be as forbidding as the authorities chose: patrolled by the army on both sides, heavily mined, impenetrable. Such a wall would maximize security, and there would be no international protest or violation of international law."

Fergus Wilkie

While the "anarchist" professor kowtows to "international law," we Marxists know that the 1948-49 "Green Line" was drawn through the living body of the Palestinian people. Our fight is for a socialist federation of the Near East, the only road for the liberation of ***all*** the peoples of the region.

Chomsky's "alternative" is to call on U.S. imperialism to play a progressive role: "Any real chance for a political settlement—and for decent lives for the people of the region—depends on the United States." Radical youth beware—Chomsky is doing his own bit to "manufacture consent," pushing the deadly illusion that the imperialist system of war, racism and oppression can be reformed.

AP

Mass Palestinian protest against Israeli wall sealing Palestinian ghettos, February 23. Chomsky defends Israel's "right" to build wall, as long as it's inside "the internationally recognized border."

class—the people whose labor creates the wealth in this society. The fact that the working class creates this wealth through its labor means that it has the social power to shut down production.

Workers actions against the war, especially in the U.S., would have had a qualitatively greater impact than the millions of people marching in all the cities of the world. Why? Because if the people who load the ships with armaments and supplies for the war were to go on strike, and defend such a strike with mass picket lines, the ships wouldn't get loaded. There were several such actions by transportation workers in Scotland and Italy who refused to drive trains loaded with supplies headed for Iraq during the war. These were a model of what needed to happen more broadly.

Our class-struggle perspective was in direct counterposition to the politics of the antiwar coalitions, which were built in essence to provide a platform for capitalist politicians. The lie promoted by these groups was that if the demands of the antiwar movement were kept to the lowest common denominator that would draw in the greatest number of people, and the rulers would have to take heed of the outrage of the masses. Obviously this didn't work. Some activists might retort that if our alternative of working-class struggle against the war was so great in contrast, then why didn't it happen in the U.S.?

The capitalists understand what a huge threat the social power of the working class is to them, and that's why they not only have cops and anti-union legislation to break up strikes, but also the ideological means such as promoting patriotism, nationalism and racism to keep the workers from using that power. The bloody and militant history of the American labor movement is replete with examples of workers organizing, often under the leadership of reds, to take on the capitalists and succeeding in turning their anti-union laws into worthless pieces of paper. However, especially since the reds were purged from the unions during the McCarthy-era Cold War witchhunts, the leadership of the union movement in the U.S. has been staunchly pro-capitalist and anti-communist.

Part of our task as revolutionaries is to unmask all the false ideas promoted by the capitalists and much of the current leadership of the trade unions so that the social power of the working class can be unlocked and mobilized in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed. We seek to organize workers on the basis of a class-struggle policy rather than the current AFL-CIO politics of exercising pressure on the capitalist politicians through the ballot box and lobbying. No right or reform in favor of the working people and oppressed has ever been won through an election or lobbying—it took class and social struggle to win these things, and that is what is needed to defend them when the capitalists inevitably try to take them away.

That the gap between U.S. rhetoric about "liberating" Iraq and the reality at home is especially palpable for many blacks and minorities in the U.S. was captured by black author Walter Mosley in an interview published in the *New York Times Magazine* last month, where he noted that black people in the U.S. weren't surprised by the criminal September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Because of their own experiences with racial oppression at home, black people more readily perceive the widespread hatred of racist U.S. imperialism around the world and this is one of the Achilles' heels of U.S. imperialism.

The racial oppression of black people has always been integral to American capitalism, and despite the abolition of slavery through the Civil War and despite the civil rights movement, which won an end to formal Jim Crow segregation, blacks remain forcibly segregated at the bottom of this society. A reflection of this is their disproportionate representation in the military—for many black youth the only chance of going to school or getting a job is to enlist. This, along with the important black component of the American working class, means that black people and the fight for black liberation will be central to ending racist American capitalism.

WV Photo

Jesse Jackson addresses October 2002 antiwar protest. Antiwar coalitions built platform for Democrats.

Break with the Democratic Party of Racism and War!

A whole range of bourgeois supporters of the Iraq war are now wailing that they were cruelly misled by the Bush administration—such is the case of the Democrats who in their majority voted in favor of the March 2003 resolution in support of the war and who retailed the Bush administration's lying pretext for it. In its defense, the Bush administration is now correctly pointing out that a lot of the intelligence on Iraq dates back to the Democratic Clinton administration which also had a policy of "regime change" in Iraq. To the extent that Democrats have opposed the war, including growing numbers in retrospect, it was based on accepting the premise of the war as justified but quibbling over *how* the Bush administration went about this.

There were also those politicians, such as those on the platform at antiwar demonstrations, who understood that because many black, minority and working-class people stood in opposition to the war, some Democrats had better position themselves against the war to make sure all these people didn't lose faith in the Democratic Party. This is why many of the spokesmen at the antiwar demonstrations were black Democrats such as Al Sharpton, Cynthia McKinney and Barbara Lee.

We are opposed to any kind of vote or support to the Democrats, not because of this or that bad policy they might pursue, but because their purpose is to administer capitalism and defend the interests of the capitalists, which necessarily means against the working class and the oppressed.

That is not to say that there aren't differences between the Democrats and the Republicans. In essence these boil down to the Democrats being better at masking imperialist plunder and capitalist exploitation with a facade of human rights and democracy, while the Republicans are just in your face about it—they don't feel the need to hide their cronyism or throw a few more crumbs at the poor. The capitalists can make use of either of these faces for a capitalist government—it

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AP

Arab woman weeps in front of her Kirkuk home seized by Kurds, April 2003. U.S. colonial occupation exacerbates national and religious conflicts, which threaten to erupt into all-sided communalist slaughter.

Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

doesn't fundamentally change the system.

There is no better proof of the Democrats' fundamental commitment to defending the interests of U.S. imperialism against working people at home and abroad than their wholehearted support for the so-called "war on terror." The criminal attack on the World Trade Center on September 11 was a huge gift to the American rulers. Under the rubric of the "war on terror," civil liberties have been shredded, thousands of immigrants in the U.S. have been detained and deported, and unknown numbers of foreign nationals as well as U.S. citizens have been declared "enemy combatants" with no rights and spirited off to U.S. military prison camps.

Such a person is U.S. citizen Jose Padilla, on behalf of whom the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defense organization in accordance with the views of the Spartacist League, have submitted a "friend of the court" brief. In this brief we describe the "war on terror" as follows:

> "It is a 'war' without a defined enemy, a war without end. There is no war by any military definition. There is no shooting war and no battle between state powers. The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

The "war on terror" is a political construct which justifies not only the U.S. government's right to disappear anyone they claim is a terrorist but to assassinate them as well.

Last November the *New York Times* reported that the FBI issued a memorandum ten days before last October's demonstrations against the occupation of Iraq advising local law enforcement officials to report any suspicious activities at demonstrations to the FBI's counter-terrorism squads and warning of potential "threats" ranging from "homemade bombs" to the "formation of human chains"!

The California Anti-Terrorism Information Center helped plan a premeditated cop attack on an April 7 antiwar protest last year at the Port of Oakland where riot-equipped officers fired potentially lethal wooden bullets, pellet-firing "sting bags" and concussion grenades on antiwar activists and longshoremen. In Iowa, federal prosecutors went after participants in an antiwar conference, issuing subpoenas which were fortunately withdrawn after widespread publicity. Under the watchwords of "fighting terrorism," trade unionists, black people, immigrants and all opponents of this oppressive system are targeted. But as we have pointed out from the beginning, what this government can get away with in applying their laws depends on class and social struggle.

Liberal Left Pushes Reformist Schemes

There is a veritable hysteria among liberals and many leftists over the 2004 presidential elections as the most important in the history of the world. In a statement urging West Coast longshoremen to campaign for the Democratic Party against Bush, International Longshore and Warehouse Union president James Spinosa stated, "The fate of all American working people...of working people around the world, of human and civil rights and of the global environment hang in the balance." Another example of this hysteria is the panicked liberal/Democratic reaction to Ralph Nader's presidential campaign.

In 2000, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Alternative called for a vote to Nader. While the ISO has not (yet?) declared its support to Nader's 2004 campaign, Socialist Alternative has. We opposed a vote to Nader in the 2000 elections, as we do today, on principle. Nader is a capitalist politician who ran on the ticket of a small capitalist party, the Greens. Far from being a real working-class alternative, Nader's campaign was intended by his own admission to pressure the Democrats somewhat more in the direction of liberalism, and actually served to draw youth disgusted with the Republicans and Democrats back into the fold of bourgeois electoral politics.

Supposed "anarchist" and virulent anti-communist Noam Chomsky (see page 9) has also been bitten by the anybody-but-Bush bug. He has signed on to a document called "Bush Can Be Stopped: A Letter to the Left," which states that "Traditional debates on the left about the value of electoral politics and the lesser evil pale in light of the need to defeat Bush and his congressional accomplices." Funnily enough, the words Democratic Party don't actually appear anywhere in the letter, but the conclusion one should draw is clear.

The *Progressive* (January 2004) published a speech liberal academic Howard Zinn wrote for whoever ends up being the Democratic presidential candidate, which already tells you who Zinn will be voting for. The speech promises a whole range of reforms and pledges to change U.S. foreign policy to that of a "peaceful nation, always ready to defend ourselves, but not sending our troops and planes all over the world for the benefit of the oil interests and the other great corporations that profit from war."

In that small sentence Zinn obliterates any real understanding of imperialism, and perpetuates the myth, as does the whole speech, that capitalism can be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed rather than those of the rapacious capitalist class. Imperialism is not a policy that the capitalists can choose to employ one day, and not the other—it is a system that will only end with the uprooting of capitalism, and its replacement with a planned and collectivized economy of production for human need and want, rather than profit.

Young Spartacus

As Democratic president Carter launched Cold War II over Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979-80, Spartacist League hailed Soviet forces against U.S.-backed Islamic fundamentalists.

Anti-globalization ideologue Naomi Klein looks to international law to rein in U.S. imperialism's "economic colonization" of Iraq. How? In an article titled "Bring Halliburton Home" (*Nation*, 24 November 2003), she wrote: "Easy: by showing that Bremer's reforms were illegal to begin with." She says, "It's too late to stop the war, but it's not too late to deny Iraq's invaders the myriad economic prizes they went to war to collect in the first place." All the exposure of lies leading into the war and outrage by millions around the world couldn't stop the war, yet Klein believes that through the pressure of international law the U.S. is not going to pillage its new colony!

In a statement author and activist Arundhati Roy made to the World Social Forum in Mumbai in January, reprinted in the *Nation*, she calls for the anti-globalization movement to focus on the struggle to end the occupation of Iraq and become the global resistance to it by "acting to make it materially impossible for Empire to achieve its aims. It means soldiers should refuse to fight, reservists should refuse to serve, workers should refuse to load ships and aircraft with weapons."

While Arundhati Roy stands out in calling for working-class struggle, she also promotes a "corporate campaign" along the lines of some of the actions already carried out by groups such as Direct Action Against the War. Shortly after the war, Roy began calling for imposing "a regime of Peoples' Sanctions on every corporate house that has been awarded with a contract in postwar Iraq.... Each one of them should be named, exposed, and boycotted. Forced out of business." Roy is falsely positing that consumers, rather than workers, can shut down these companies. Furthermore, with a goal of driving these companies out of business, what makes the others that would take their place any better? A humane or fair capitalist is a fiction.

The view underlying these various campaigns against the likes of Halliburton and Bechtel is that poverty and war don't stem from the capitalist system itself, but from malfeasant, out of control corporations and "undemocratic" rulers such as the Bush administration who fail to listen to the will of the people. This is what leads many to believe that if only we could just shut down the IMF or WTO, or if we could get the UN to enforce international law consistently, then we could have "peace and justice." Fundamentally, this is the illusion that imperialism is a policy rather than a system that needs to be destroyed.

Another premise of such campaigns to "disrupt business as usual" is that through acts of civil disobedience you can force the capitalist rulers to listen to the people and thereby have effective democracy. This wrongly assumes that the ruling class, or a section of it, would do the right thing if only we grab their attention and show the way. Meanwhile, these activists largely ignore the people who really do have the power to shut these companies down and bring production to a grinding halt—the workers. At best, they might view the struggles of the working class as actions by just another of the many sectors of the oppressed. They don't see the working class as the force uniquely capable of shutting the capitalist system down.

The Left Tails on the Left Tails of the Democrats

The main ostensibly revolutionary or Marxist organizations that participated heavily in building antiwar coalitions were the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), International Socialist Organization and Workers World Party. All these organizations are now writing lengthy articles arguing against voting for the Democrats. Yet these words stand in stark contrast to their deeds. In an article arguing against support to supposed "antiwar" candidate Howard Dean, the RCP concludes with the following question: "What would it mean...if the energies and resources of antiwar forces get ***subordinated*** to a Democratic electoral program that is so fundamentally pro-war and pro-imperialist?" (*Revolutionary Worker*, 18 January).

Here's a news flash for the RCP: the antiwar forces *were* subordinated to a pro-imperialist Democratic electoral program from Day One, thanks to organizations like theirs. These three organizations which are now bemoaning that the antiwar movement has been derailed into an electoral campaign for the Democratic Party are reaping exactly what they sowed. They were the main left-wing proponents of building an antiwar movement designed to boost the electoral fortunes of the Democrats—that is why all these so-called revolutionaries not only couldn't bring themselves to forthrightly call for the defense of Iraq, but didn't dare get on the antiwar demonstration platforms and denounce the Democratic Party for being a party of racism and war, especially if Al Sharpton or Barbara Lee were within earshot. These organizations wanted Democrats on their platforms and did all they could to get them there, and *now* they tell working people to beware! What chutzpah!

We intervened in antiwar demonstra-

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NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League's public office will be closed on Saturday, March 20 due to demonstrations against the occupation of Iraq.

Columbia...

(continued from page 12)

out to protest on March 9!

At Columbia University, where the black student population is fairly small, the CCCC attempted to heighten racial divisions between students by promoting the lie that Jews run this country and black students are given a free ride. This racist stunt was organized to coincide with the Center for Career Education's Diversity Recruiting Conference, a program to help minority students find jobs. The CCCC, those boys and girls for whom the College Republicans are insufficiently right-wing, are infamous for targeting everyone from gay students to leftists to the late Professor Edward Said. In recent years, the CCCC has brought slavery apologist and all-purpose Reaganite pig Dinesh D'Souza to campus, along with other racist, right-wing ideologues. The Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) has initiated protests at Columbia to expose D'Souza, and also to keep ROTC and military recruiters off campus. A militant, mass, integrated protest on campus would make the racist yahoos think twice about spewing their filth!

The newly formed Columbia University Concerned Students of Color (CUCSC) has submitted a list of demands to the administration. The student demands included calls to create a "safe space" for minorities on campus. The CUCSC leadership seeks to defuse the anger that continues to boil by pressuring the administration to defend the rights of black students. Racial oppression is the bedrock of capitalist America, where black people are a race-color caste forcibly segregated at the bottom of society. The main role of elite schools like Columbia is to train the next generation of technocrats, union-busting lawyers and State Department officials to help maintain the capitalist system. Columbia is also a notorious slumlord of neighboring predominantly black Harlem. It was the administration who turned over the names of foreign and immigrant students to the INS in 2001 soon after Bush declared his "war on terror" anti-immigrant witchhunt. As one campus maintenance worker remarked to a *Workers Vanguard* salesman, Columbia is run by a gang of union-busters. We say that calling for "anti-oppression training" or "disciplinary actions and policies to prevent and handle transgressions against marginalized student populations" will only give the administration a freer hand in attempting to squash political dissent and social struggle on campus.

Tailing behind the CUCSC leadership, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) prefers to beg the administration to act in the interests of the oppressed rather than endorse our protest mobilizing *against* it. This is not the first time the ISO is trying to head off social struggle. When the KKK sought to stage a race-hate provocation in New York City in October 1999, we mobilized labor/black power and stopped the fascists while the ISO shamelessly enlisted with the Democrats in a "tolerance" for the Klan diversion, even sharing a platform with Latino cops.

Lasting gains cannot be achieved through a strategy of pressuring the campus administration, Congress, the Supreme Court or other capitalist institutions. It took militant, mass struggle to integrate the schools and kick ROTC off campus. Today, as in the past, it will take social struggle to gain any improvement in the lives of oppressed minorities in this society. The SYC defends affirmative action against attempts to further purge blacks and minorities from higher education. We fight for free, quality, integrated education for all! To provide real access to higher education, we call for nationalizing the private universities and for open admissions and free tuition with a state-paid living stipend for students. Open the gates of Columbia to the people of Harlem! We demand full remedial programs at the universities, an end to the racist "tracking" system in the high schools and genuine integration of the schools, including the aggressive implementation of busing.

As the recent cop killing of 19-year-old Bedford-Stuyvesant resident Timothy Stansbury Jr. shows, to be black in this racist society is to be treated like a criminal. Stansbury was part of a generation that the capitalist class treats as surplus population, to be locked away in prison hellholes or to serve as cannon fodder in brutal imperialist wars like in Iraq. At the same time as the American military terrorizes the people of Iraq, the bipartisan "war on terror" targets immigrants, blacks and labor here in the U.S. It is all an inherent part of the capitalist system, a system where a tiny minority profits from exploitation, oppression and war.

Lacking social power, students must take their fight against racism on campus to the multiracial working class of the city. Only the working class, the class that produces all the wealth of society, has the social power and objective interest to lead the oppressed in struggle against capitalism. Just as it took the Civil War to smash chattel slavery, it will take a socialist revolution to sweep away the entire capitalist system and lay the basis for wiping out the centuries-old legacy of racial oppression. We seek to win students to the perspective of fighting in the interests of the working class and building a revolutionary workers party to lead this struggle. Join us in protesting the racist offensive on campus!■

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tions and events on the basis of the need for working-class struggle against the war and in opposition to the Democratic Party. Imperialist war is an inevitable outgrowth of the capitalist system itself, therefore you cannot fight to end it by joining with representatives of the very system that breeds war. The ISO, RCP and Workers World, including through their Not In Our Name and ANSWER coalitions, did all they could to convince people to unite with a wing of the capitalist class enemy. We are called sectarian for rejecting such "unity," but our business is speaking the truth to working people and youth based on the lessons of the hard-fought struggles of the past.

For New October Revolutions!

The core issue distinguishing us in practice as well as theory from pretty much all those groups and individuals claiming to have a program for changing the world for the better is the defense of those states where capitalism was overturned. The Soviet Union was born in October 1917 during the interimperialist slaughter of the First World War. After three years of war the Russian workers, peasants and soldiers rose up and overthrew the tsarist rulers, and months later the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky led a workers revolution against a weak capitalist coalition government of bourgeois and socialist elements. This was the first time ever that the working class took political power on the basis of its own institutions; the soviets, or workers and peasants councils, served as the basis for the new government. The capitalists and landowners were expropriated and the economic resources of society were reorganized in the interests of workers and the oppressed, establishing a centrally planned and collectivized economy. The revolution had an enormously liberating effect on all aspects of social and cultural life. The Bolsheviks saw the revolution as the beginning of spreading socialist revolution worldwide, and it inspired millions of workers and the oppressed around the world.

But capitalism was not overthrown in any other country in the wake of the October Revolution—the main reason being the absence of revolutionary vanguard parties such as that built by Lenin in Russia. After a brutal civil war and invasions by imperialist armies seeking to overturn the October Revolution, the Soviet Union was economically and socially devastated and faced international isolation. It appeared that the gap between the liberating goals of the revolution and the grim realities of life in the Soviet Union could not be bridged. Under such conditions the working class tended to become demoralized. Many of the administrators and officials of the ruling Communist Party lost faith in the prospect of socialist revolution internationally and became increasingly concerned with maintaining and advancing their own privileges. These tendencies led to what Trotsky described later as a political counterrevolution in 1924 in which a bureaucratic layer headed by Stalin took political power out of the hands of the working class and proceeded to consolidate his regime.

Trotsky's attitude to these developments was not to wash his hands of the Soviet Union. He understood that while the political regime was no longer one of working-class democracy, the overturn of capitalist property relations was not reversed. He urged workers around the world to defend the Soviet Union in the same way that workers must defend a trade union in any battle against the capitalists and their state, even if the union has a bureaucratic, sellout leadership. Trotsky understood that there were only two ways in which this contradiction could be resolved: either the Stalinist bureaucracy, becoming more and more the tool of bourgeois forces in the workers state, would open the door to overturning the planned and collectivized economy, bringing back capitalism; or the workers would crush the bureaucracy through a proletarian political revolution and open the road to socialism through the struggle for workers revolution internationally.

Unfortunately, the former took place in the USSR and throughout the East European deformed workers states in the early 1990s. The toll of human devastation for the working masses in these countries as the result of the restoration of capitalism is testament to the superiority of the collectivized economies of the workers states and underscores why defending these was so important. The social gains won through struggle by workers in the countries of West Europe are being shredded in large part because the capitalist classes there no longer feel threatened by the spectre of communism, and interimperialist rivalries have been unleashed as the imperialist powers have dispensed with their former alliance against the Soviet Union.

It is against this scary and brutal post-Soviet world that we fought, not just in words, but in deeds, most notably in East Germany and Russia. We stood up to the Cold War drive to destroy the Soviet Union, being unique in hailing the Soviet Red Army when it entered Afghanistan on the side of social progress and women's rights against the Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats. These Islamists were cultivated by U.S. imperialism as a bulwark against the spread of communism in Central Asia and the Near East, and it was thousands of innocent working people in the World Trade Center who died when this Frankenstein's monster turned on its U.S. imperialist masters.

Today we apply the same program of unconditional military defense, including the right to possess nuclear weapons, to the remaining deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. These are states where capitalism was overturned, but which were built on the Stalinist model, meaning that the working class never held political power. It is elementary that an organization which cannot defend the gains won in the past is incapable of fighting for new victories. That is true of all those who refuse to defend the workers states, including the anarchists, ISO and RCP. It is not coincidental that those who refuse to defend the workers states are the same ones who have a program of reforming capitalism.

As the American section of the International Communist League, we are trying to build a revolutionary party, based on the multiracial working class and the black, Latino and other oppressed sections of American society. The goal of such a party is to shatter U.S. imperialism from within, and in so doing open the road to communism around the world.■

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

No. 31, Summer 2003

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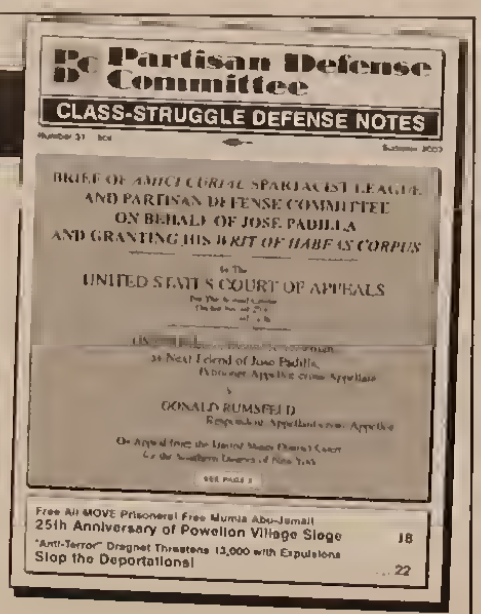

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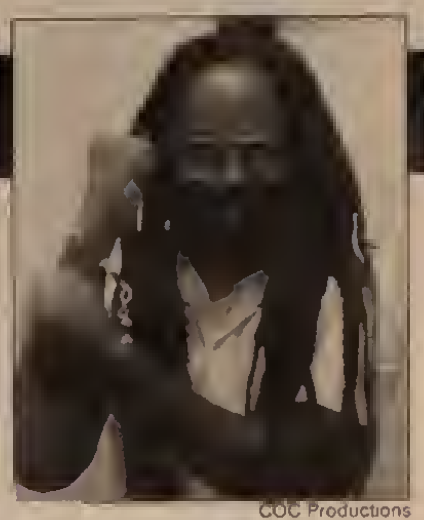

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On March 8, death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal filed a petition for a writ of *certiorari* (review) with the U.S. Supreme Court. Robert Bryan, attorney for Jamal, seeks to overturn last October's Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision upholding Jamal's conviction and death sentence. Jamal's petition cites the overt racial bias of the trial and appellate courts in whose hands Jamal's life has rested. These papers describe courts where even the formal distinction between judge and prosecutor is totally obliterated; where the trial judge blithely pronounces his racist animus toward Jamal; where one of Jamal's key prosecutors becomes one of the appellate judges who rules on whether Mumia is to live or die. They paint a picture of courts more commonly associated with those of the Deep South of the Jim Crow era.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a textbook example of a classic racist political frame-up. An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the Philadelphia police and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party (BPP) spokesman at the age of 15. An award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" and a supporter of the predominantly black, back-to-nature MOVE organization, Jamal continues to speak out from death row in commentaries carried in *Workers Vanguard* and other papers across the country, condemning racist cop atrocities, denouncing imperialist war and voicing his support for the battles of striking workers.

In recent years, numerous death row prisoners have had their convictions tossed out due to DNA evidence, eyewitness testimony of innocence, recantation of prosecution witnesses who originally testified under police coercion, and other forms of prosecutorial misconduct. *Not Jamal.* Despite conclusive evidence that he is innocent, Mumia still sits in a six by nine foot cell on death row.

For over two years, both Pennsylvania state courts and federal courts have refused to even consider testimony from Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Beverly's confession, which he has allowed to be recorded on video, is supported by a series of affidavits and hundreds of pages of memoranda prepared by Partisan Defense Committee counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Faulkner on 9 December 1981, at a time when the Feds were conducting at least three investigations of corruption in the Philadelphia Police Department. Beverly's confession states he was "hired, along with another guy, and paid to shoot and kill Faulkner" because Faulkner had reportedly been "a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen." Beverly added, "Faulkner was shot in the back and then in the face before Jamal came on the scene." When Jamal arrived, he was shot in the chest and nearly bled to death.

Jamal's innocence has been evident from the outset. The PDC and the Spartacist League have repeatedly exposed the D.A.'s case, which rested on three legs: eyewitness accounts that were secured through police manipulation, coercion and outright terror; a purported "confession" by Jamal while he was lying near death in the hospital, which didn't surface until two months after the killing; ballistics "evidence" concocted by the police that the bullets that killed Faulkner were fired from Jamal's gun. But Jamal was saddled at trial with a lawyer he didn't want—and who did not want Mumia's case; a judge, Albert Sabo, known as the "king of death row"; an overwhelmingly white jury; a prosecutor's office that concealed and fabricated evidence and threatened witnesses.

Also pending in the federal courts is Jamal's application for *habeas corpus* relief. Two years ago federal district court judge William Yohn overturned

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SYC Mobilizes Protest at Columbia U.

Young Spartacus

NEW YORK—Chanting "Defend affirmative action! Down with racist reaction!" and "1, 2, 3, 4—time to finish the Civil War! 5, 6, 7, 8—forward to a workers state!" the Spartacus Youth Club held a spirited speakout at Columbia University on March 9 against the series of recent racist provocations on campus. Attacks on affirmative action like the Columbia College Conservative Club's bigoted anti-affirmative action "bake sale" come in the context of the bosses' wholesale assault on democratic rights under the rubric of the bipartisan "war on terror." SYC speaker Erica Jones said, "The same imperialist rulers who are colonizing and dropping bombs on Iraq have been waging war against black people, immigrants and labor here at home." We pointed out that racial oppression can only be eradicated by getting rid of the capitalist system, and carried signs stating: "For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!"

Several students, professors and union workers endorsed the SYC-initiated united-front protest called under the slogans "Down With Racist Provocations on Campus!" and "Defend Affirmative Action!" However, the leadership of the Columbia University Concerned Students of Color (CUCSC) refused to endorse the protest. While the CUCSC held several silent vigils and a speakout of their own, they wanted to be as far away from our politics as possible. In particular, our sign "Abolish the Administration! For Student/Faculty/Worker Control of the Universities!" irritated them at their first silent vigil. Carrying out their role as water boys to the liberals, the reformist International Socialist Organization (ISO) refused to endorse the March 9 protest, as is their habit when communists motivate necessary struggle. The only sign of the ISO at—or more properly *near*—the protest was a lone member scurrying by.

Young Spartacus

SYC-initiated protest against racist provocations at Columbia, March 9.

Down With the Racist Provocations! Defend Affirmative Action!

The "bake sale" is part of a crusade by the right wing to roll back what gains remain of the civil rights movement. As we said in *WV* No. 821 (5 March):

> "There has been a right-wing onslaught on campuses nationwide, both at state schools and elite private ones. Since the beginning of 2003, College Republicans and other conservative groups have held racist anti-affirmative action 'bake sales' at schools across the country.... The 'bake sales' have grown in number following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling last year, which did not go far enough for right-wingers in gutting such affirmative action programs as still exist."

We reprint below a March 8 SYC statement circulated with our call for the March 9 united-front protest.

* * *

On February 5, during Black History Month, the disgusting bigots in the Columbia College Conservative Club (CCCC) launched a racist provocation against affirmative action at Alfred Lerner Hall. In an action that was anti-black, anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and sexist, the CCCC held a so-called "affirmative action bake sale" that grotesquely sold baked goods to Jewish and Asian males at higher prices than to white males; black, Latino and female students were charged even less. Students have been justifiably outraged at the CCCC's blatant provocation. The "bake sale" has been only one among a slew of racist incidents on campus which include a vile cartoon in the *Fed*'s most recent issue that mocked the oppression of black people and the Columbia University Marching Band's racist and sexist insults at its "Orgo Night" in December. We call on all anti-racist students and workers to come

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 823 | 2 April 2004

Bush's Iraq Coalition Splinters

Spain: Heinous Bombing and Official Lies Topple Government

Following the criminal bombing of passenger trains in Madrid on March 11, which killed some 200 people, the population's grief and horror turned to fury over the lies manufactured by the Popular Party (PP) and Prime Minister José María Aznar. The PP is the political heir to the bloody military dictatorship of Generalissimo Francisco Franco, who came to power in the late 1930s after crushing the insurgent proletariat during the Spanish Civil War. Aznar personally phoned the major newspapers to plant the lie that the bombing was the work of the Basque separatist group ETA, despite the organization's disavowal and condemnation of this heinous crime. The mounting evidence that the bombing was the work of Islamic fundamentalists in payback for Spain's stalwart support to U.S. imperialism's Iraq war, which was opposed by 90 percent of Spaniards, was the political bombshell that dumped Aznar out of office in a surprise upset in the general election three days later.

Aznar had staked his career on repressing the Basques and no doubt thought the Madrid bombing could be manipulated for his political convenience. But on the eve of the election, thousands took to the streets and laid siege to PP headquarters around the country, chanting, "The dead are ours! The war is yours!" Families of the

continued on page 4

Grotesque Assassination of Reactionary Hamas Leader

Bloody Zionist Provocation

MARCH 29—The March 22 assassination of the "spiritual leader" of Hamas, Ahmed Yassin, a partially blind 67-year-old quadriplegic, expressed the supreme arrogance and barbarism of Israel's rulers. Three shrapnel-packed missiles were fired from helicopters, hitting the wheelchair-bound cleric, killing seven others and injuring 17. Since the assassination, at least 18 Palestinians have been killed, including five in the massive protests in Gaza and the West Bank. Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon wants to make clear not only to the besieged Palestinians but also to his ministerial critics on the far right that his much-vaunted "withdrawal" from Gaza does not mean that the Zionist rulers are any less determined to destroy any vestige of Palestinian resistance.

The day following Yassin's assassination, General Moshe Yalon of the Israeli military responded when asked if Yasir Arafat and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah were targets for elimination: "Judging by yesterday's reactions they understand that their turn draws closer." As we wrote in "Israel Hands Off Arafat!" (*WV* No. 810, 26 September 2003), the full intent of the threats against Arafat was clear: "The Zionist regime was announcing to the world that they were ready for a mass slaughter of Palestinians that would far overshadow the April 2002 bloodbath in Jenin.... The threat to 'liquidate' Arafat is only the most recent provocation in the Zionist state's long history of *assassination as policy*." The Israeli ruling class is sending a message to the Palestinian masses—to those imprisoned in Gaza by an electric fence and those trapped in the West Bank by concrete walls—that it has license to obliterate every Palestinian leader of any stripe. ***Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!***

AFP

Reuters

March 25: Palestinians gather around houses demolished by escalating Israeli incursions into Gaza following Yassin assassination. Above: Ariel Sharon and imperialist patron George Bush.

On March 25, the U.S. vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the assassination of Yassin. U.S. imperialism certainly has no problem with "extrajudicial executions," as its history, from the repeated attempts on the life of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi to the coldblooded killings of leaders of the former Iraqi regime, demonstrates. This has been the policy of both Republican and Democratic administrations. In fact, when it comes to support to Israel—including massive U.S. military aid—the Democrats are at least as rabid as the Republicans. The U.S. rulers' main concern right now is that Israel's provocations in the Occupied Territories do not fuel further outrage toward American imperialism's bloody occupation of Iraq. We say: ***Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out now!***

The assassination of Yassin sparked widespread protests throughout the Near East, from Cairo to Damascus and occupied Iraq. Many of the protesters carried green Islamic flags and large portraits of the slain cleric. The Egyptian-based *Al-Ahram Weekly* (25 March) headlined one of its articles, "We Are All Hamas Now." The killing of Yassin will likely drive many Palestinians further into the arms of reactionary, anti-woman and anti-Jewish fundamentalists like Hamas. But Hamas is a deadly enemy of Palestinian women, workers and leftists. Abhorring secularism and women's rights, they have forced many Palestinian women in the Gaza Strip into the *hijab* (headscarf).

In the 1980s, Israel encouraged the development of Hamas as an alternative to the secular-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) of Arafat. As Palestinians grew frustrated with the bankruptcy of the PLO, especially after the treacherous 1993 Oslo accords, Hamas and other fundamentalist groups grew. At the same time, Hamas has gained prominence in Gaza by providing many of the social services that the population lacks. It is a tragedy that the violence inflicted by the Zionist rulers against the Palestinians has driven a large chunk of that historically cosmopolitan population into supporting thoroughly reactionary religious obscurantist groups like Hamas.

The murder of Yassin will not, as Israeli government spokesmen would claim, prevent terror attacks but rather guarantees there will be more of them. Such terror attacks against Israeli civilians, like the March 14 suicide bombings in the port city of Ashdod which killed ten port workers, are entirely criminal and reprehensible from the viewpoint of the international working class. They only serve to reinforce the reactionary grip of Israel's capitalist rulers over the Hebrew-speaking working masses.

There is no solution to the oppression of the Palestinian masses within the framework of decaying capitalism, which bases itself on racist national aggrandizement

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"War on Terror" Frame-Up of Radical Lawyer
Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart!

On April 9, New York City attorney Lynne Stewart faces another day in court. This time, though, she isn't there to fight for freedom from the clutches of the state for the leftists, black activists and others deemed enemies by the U.S.' racist rulers, as she has for the past three decades. This time Stewart, a 64-year-old grandmother, is fighting for her own freedom.

She and two Arab men, Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Mohammed Yousry, were indicted on charges of supporting "terrorism" under the USA-Patriot Act. Enacted shortly after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, this draconian law broadens the definition of "terrorist" to include just about anybody deemed an opponent of the government. Stewart is facing up to 40 years in prison for the "crime" of being an attorney for blind Egyptian sheik Omar Ahmed-Rahman, who is imprisoned for life on "seditious conspiracy" charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Yousry is included in the indictment for having acted as Rahman's interpreter. Stewart's paralegal Sattar, alleged to be a member of Rahman's Islamic Group, has been imprisoned for two years. They are charged simply for having communicated with Rahman or with each other. The Feds are also charging Stewart with fraud for violating the "Special Administrative Measures" she allegedly agreed to in 1999, which allowed her access to her client Ahmed-Rahman on the condition that she not convey any communications to or from him.

As we wrote two years ago when the charges were first announced, the frame-up "is part of the frontal attack on civil liberties that accompanies the U.S.-led 'global war on terror.' Using the fear born of the attack on the World Trade Center as a pretext, the Bush administration, with most Democrats in tow, pushed through a package of legislation, executive fiats and Justice Department regulations which marked a qualitative diminution of democratic rights" (*WV* No. 779, 19 April 2002). We demand that all charges against Stewart, Yousry and Sattar be dropped now!

What's at stake here is the Sixth Amendment right to legal representation, without which any individual running afoul of the state is thrown defenseless into the capitalist courts. As the Stewart case demonstrates, those caught in the government's anti-terror web who are lucky enough to be allowed access to legal counsel may find their lawyer in the cell next door. Stewart's attorney, Michael Tigar, accurately states in motion papers demanding the charges be dismissed, "This case is a vindictive effort to chill courageous advocacy by all lawyers."

The prosecution suffered a blow last July when district court judge John Koeltl dismissed the "terrorism" charges as unconstitutionally "void for vagueness," i.e., that no "reasonable person" could understand that the acts for which Stewart was being prosecuted are against the law. In November, the Feds vindictively filed a "superseding indictment," which merely repackages the same charges tossed out by the court four months earlier.

In dismissing the terrorism charges, Judge Koeltl admonished, "The Government accuses Stewart of providing personnel, including herself, to IG [Islamic Group]. In so doing, however, the Government fails to explain how a lawyer, acting as an agent of her client, an alleged leader of an FTO [Foreign Terrorist Organization], could avoid being subject to criminal prosecution as a 'quasi-employee' allegedly covered by the statute." That's exactly the point. Equating lawyers with the alleged crimes of their clients is nothing new. In the 1950s, when the Communist Party was declared an illegal organization and its members and anyone having contact with them were dragged before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), their lawyers were vilified or indicted as well.

A centerpiece of the government's war on civil liberties is the denial of legal process for anybody Bush, Cheney or Ashcroft deem a "bad guy." Hundreds imprisoned in Guantánamo for over two years, many of them tortured, have no way to challenge their detention. Having been pronounced "enemy combatants" by Bush, U.S. citizens Yaser Esam Hamdi and Jose Padilla remain locked up in a South Carolina military brig, without charges against them, without access to their attorney, and with no prospect of a hearing to challenge the accusations against them. With the persecution of Lynne Stewart, Bush, Ashcroft & Co. seek to inscribe in the American judicial system that virtually no one will have any rights the government is bound to respect—from undocumented immigrants to attorneys who are supposed to have certain protections, not least of which is the assurance that representing the accused doesn't make you a party to the crimes of which they are charged.

In the gun sights of the government's anti-terror witchhunt is just about everyone perceived as an opponent by the capitalist rulers—from those who oppose U.S. imperialist wars abroad to those who speak out against racist oppression or fight to defend their unions and livelihoods against attacks by the employers. The fact that the government is going after lawyers signifies an ominous attempt to eviscerate the right to effective counsel in the American legal system. The labor movement, fighters for black rights and all opponents of capitalist injustice have a direct interest in joining in defense of Lynne Stewart, Ahmed Abdel Sattar and Mohammed Yousry and in calling for freedom for all those detained in the anti-immigrant witchhunt. ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Proletarian Democracy vs. Bourgeois Democracy

Leading Bolsheviks Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky wrote The ABC of Communism *in 1919, following the victory of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, as a textbook for communist cadre education. In the following excerpt, they unmask the fraud of bourgeois democracy, counterposing to it the proletarian democracy of the early soviet workers republic. Such democracy for the working and oppressed masses can only be achieved through a working-class revolution against the bourgeois order.*

How can there be a "common" will for bourgeoisie and proletariat? It is manifest that the very phrase about a will common to the whole nation is humbug if the words are intended to apply to all classes. No such common will has been realised or can be realised.

But this fraud is necessary to the bourgeoisie, necessary for the maintenance of capitalist rule. The capitalists are in the minority. They cannot venture to say openly that this small minority rules. This is why the bourgeoisie has to cheat, declaring that it rules in the name of "the whole people," "all classes," "the entire nation," and so on.

How is the fraud carried out in a "democratic republic"? The chief reason why the proletariat is enslaved to-day is because it is ***economically*** enslaved. Even in a democratic republic, the factories and workshops belong to the capitalists, and the land belongs to the capitalists and the landlords. The worker has nothing but his labour power; the poor peasant has nothing beyond a tiny scrap of land. They are eternally compelled to labour under terrible conditions, for they are under the heel of the master. On paper, they can do a great deal; in actual fact, they can do nothing. They can do nothing because all the wealth, all the power of capital, is in the hands of their enemies. This is what is termed ***bourgeois democracy***....

The Soviet Power realises a new, a much more perfect type of democracy—***proletarian democracy***. The essence of this proletarian democracy consists in this, that it ***is based upon the transference of the means of production into the hands of the workers***, thus depriving the bourgeoisie of all power. In proletarian democracy, those who formerly constituted the oppressed masses, and their organisations, have become the instruments of rule. In the capitalist system of society, and therefore in bourgeois democratic republics, there existed organisations of workers and peasants. They were, however, overwhelmed by the organisations of the rich. Under proletarian democracy, on the other hand, the rich have been deprived of their wealth. The mass organisations of the workers, the semi-proletarian peasants, etc. (soviets, trade unions, factory committees, etc.), have become the actual foundations of the proletarian State authority. In the constitution of the Soviet Republic we find at the outset the statement: "Russia declares itself to be a republic of workers', soldiers', and peasants' delegates. All power, both central and local, is vested in these soviets."

—Nikolai Bukharin and Evgeny Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism*
(Ann Arbor, 1967)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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EDITORIAL BOARD Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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Israel...

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and predatory war. The Palestinians and Hebrew-speaking people are interpenetrated, two populations with competing claims to the same piece of land. Unless a class axis is brought to the fore in this nationalist conflict, the most reactionary forces on both sides will predominate. The right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew and Palestinian peoples can only be secured by the struggle for Arab/Hebrew workers revolutions and the building of a socialist federation of the Near East. We have no illusions that it will be easy to break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionism, but it is the task of revolutionaries to use every strike, every protest, every means to drive a wider wedge between the working class of Israel and the Zionist rulers.

Significantly, on March 23, students protested at Jerusalem's Hebrew University campus where Sharon was visiting, holding signs condemning the Yassin assassination and calling on the government to end the occupation. What is most urgently posed is the construction of international working-class parties, sections of a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all variants of religious fundamentalism. This is the task to which the International Communist League, both in the imperialist heartland and throughout the world, is committed. ■

Reuters

March 23: Cops brutalize Israeli students at Jerusalem's Hebrew University protesting assassination of Yassin.

Congress Passes Anti-Woman "Fetus" Bill

Utah Prosecutes Mother in Childbirth Tragedy

Melissa Ann Rowland, a poor 28-year-old mother, has been charged with murder by Salt Lake City authorities and faces lifetime imprisonment...because one of the twins she gave birth to last January 13 was stillborn! Medical staff at the hospital claim that Rowland was told one of the twins would die if she didn't have a Caesarean section (where the belly and uterus are cut open to deliver the child). Rowland did give birth by C-section, but not quickly enough to satisfy the depraved Utah prosecutors who threw her in jail *one day after her Caesarean*. First they charged her with "child endangerment" of the surviving twin by alleged drug use; then in March, while Rowland still languished in a jail cell, they slapped a charge of criminal homicide on her. We say: Drop the charges against Melissa Ann Rowland!

This prosecution is gross interference by the state into a private medical matter, as well as cruel torture of a mother.

WV Photo

SL placard calls for free abortion on demand at March 20 antiwar demo, San Francisco.

As Rowland's court-appointed lawyer, Michael Sikora, said, "If a doctor says this will be a very difficult pregnancy and you should get complete bed rest for the last three months and the mother doesn't and the baby is stillborn, is she guilty of murder? If she smokes, is it murder? If she doesn't eat right, is it murder?" The press stoked an ugly misogynist hysteria against Rowland, lyingly asserting that she was a vain woman who killed her unborn child because she didn't want a scarred body. Yet Rowland had already had two previous children by C-section!

Newsweek (29 March) reports that a spokesman for the National Advocates for Pregnant Women estimates there are currently some 30 cases in state courts against pregnant women for supposedly harming their fetuses. The magazine states:

> "In the last few months alone, a woman in New York was charged with child endangerment for delivering a drunken baby, a mother in Hawaii was charged with manslaughter in the death of her newborn son from meth-amphetamine poisoning and a drug user in California was sentenced to life in prison for poisoning her newborn through meth-tainted breast milk."

These are very sad stories, but they aren't crimes. These pregnant women weren't helped to have healthy babies by the fact that this country has no decent health care for whole sectors of the population. Poor and minority women are being criminalized and blamed for the horrible cruelties of the capitalist system, while prison populations and poverty rates soar, and increasing numbers of children face near-starvation conditions and homelessness.

The Utah assault is part of the continuing storm of religious fundamentalism and patriarchal "family values" reaction whose focus on "fetus rights" seeks to strip women of their right to abortion. On March 25, the Senate passed the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act," which was passed by the House last month and now goes to Bush for signing. This bill recognizes the fetus as a separate and distinct person under the law and crucially undermines abortion rights in this country. Utah was already one of 31 states with "fetal homicide" laws.

Another blow against abortion rights is an attempt by the Justice Department to force hospitals to turn over medical records on abortions, ostensibly to defend the "Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act" passed by Congress in 2003. While federal judges in Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco have thus far refused to order clinics and hospitals to turn over such records, in Manhattan on March 18, a federal judge ordered New York-Presbyterian Hospital to give up its records, claiming they were not covered by laws governing medical privacy because women's identities supposedly could be hidden. This extremely ominous invasion of privacy sets up both women and their doctors for potential criminal charges as well as out-and-out terror from anti-abortion fanatics.

There have already been decades of terrorist bombings of clinics and murders of doctors and clinic staff; years of Republican and Democratic administrations squeezing abortion rights by barring federal and state funding; hospitals and medical schools intimidated from even teaching the procedure; "squeal laws" and religious lectures pounding fear and ignorance about sex and its consequences into kids.

If this country's rulers want to prosecute those who cause the death of babies, then they ought to prosecute themselves. It is the ruling class that deprives poor, minority and working women of quality health care. Most women in the United States do not get paid maternity leaves, which should be a basic right. For all the drivel that America's rulers—and their media mouthpieces—spew about children, this country has always had one of the highest infant-mortality rates among the world's advanced capitalist countries. According to a February report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the infant-mortality rate in the U.S. went up in 2002 to 7.0 deaths per 1,000 live births—the first increase in 40 years. The struggle for decent, quality health care is a vital question for working people in America, as shown by the recent UFCW grocery workers strike, where tens of thousands of workers mobilized in defense of their health care benefits. And the fight for full access to abortion for all women is part of this struggle.

Today, state punishment of single mothers doesn't end with pregnancy. We

AP

Melissa Ann Rowland

pointed out in "Depraved Court Convicts Mother for Son's Suicide" (*WV* No. 812, 24 October 2003) that last fall in New York City a working mother from Trinidad was charged with "reckless endangerment" when her two children died in a fire in their tiny illegal basement apartment, and another working mother was convicted in Connecticut on felony charges for her 12-year-old son's suicide. As we wrote: "'Family values' anti-sex hysteria is used to punish kids and working people, setting up a patriarchal model at total variance with the way most people actually live, a fake ideal to cover the lack of social services, health care, education and day care working people urgently need."

Working and poor women urgently need the right to free, safe abortion on demand and the right to free, quality medical care. Decriminalizing drug use is also vitally important for the working class and oppressed. Anti-drug laws are used purely for intimidation and punishment—the "war on drugs" is a racist witchhunt that means police occupation of the ghettos and barrios. The only criminals involved in the case of Melissa Ann Rowland are the capitalist rulers responsible for the daily hideous tragedies afflicting such poor women and their children. As we said in our previous article, "A pack of wolves shows more solidarity and concern for its nursing females and young than the capitalist rulers do."■

Spartacist League/SYC Forum

Stop Bipartisan Attacks on Women's Rights!

Free Abortion on Demand!

Saturday, April 17, 4 p.m.

University of Chicago, Bartlett Gymnasium—Student Lounge
57th and University Ave.

For more information: (312) 563-0441 or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

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Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
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Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
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(Buzzer 23)

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Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Spain...

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victims issued a statement denouncing the Aznar government and demanded, "No more blood! No more manipulation! No more lies!"

The Madrid bombings were monstrous crimes *against workers and immigrants*. Intended to cause the maximum amount of carnage, the bombs were placed on trains coming from working-class districts on the outskirts of Madrid, such as the historically militant area of El Pozo del Tío Raimundo. A quarter of those killed were immigrants of 13 different nationalities. With this bloody deed, as with the criminal attack on of the World Trade Center, the Islamic fundamentalists who claimed responsibility for the attack demonstrate the same murderous nationalist mindset of the American and European rulers by punishing the working class for the policies of their rulers. The race-hatred and blood scores inculcated by religious fundamentalism of all types are indicated by a note received by an Arabic-language newspaper in London which spoke of "settling old accounts with Spain," a reference to the 15th-century Spanish *Reconquista* which reversed the Arab conquest of Spain nearly 800 years earlier!

The unexpected victory of the social democrats of the Partido Socialista Obrero de España (PSOE) sent shock waves through Europe and the Bush White House and cracked George Bush's

Enoch Soames

Angered by government lies, crowds protest outside Popular Party headquarters in Madrid, March 13.

"Coalition of the Willing." Incoming Spanish prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero immediately announced that he would stick by his campaign promise to pull the 1,300 Spanish troops from Iraq if the United Nations did not take command of the occupation. The breach in the coalition then widened, with the Polish president complaining that it had been "misled" into Iraq on the false pretext of "weapons of mass destruction," and South Korea refused to carry out the scheduled deployment of its contingent of troops to Kirkuk.

Guerrero/El País

Rescue workers aid the injured on the tracks outside Madrid's Atocha station, March 11.

In addition to the diplomatic blow of the Spanish elections, the Bush administration is taking hits on the home front as Richard Clarke, former national security adviser to both Clinton and Bush, testified to the lies of both administrations before a Congressional committee investigating the September 11 attacks. Clarke's just-published memoir, *Against All Enemies*, became an instant best seller despite desperate attempts by the White House to discredit him. While the Bush gang's lies justly anger the American electorate, no one should have any illusions that the Democrats offer an alternative. When Zapatero announced his support to John Kerry as an "antiwar" candidate, Kerry responded by asking that Zapatero take back his pledge to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq.

The UN's Kofi Annan and Spanish leaders are scrambling to find a way to keep the Spanish in Iraq and allow Zapatero to save face. Zapatero has offered to send more troops to Afghanistan, where Spain already has a presence. Spanish troops are part of "peacekeeping" occupations under UN mandate in Kosovo and Bosnia. Spain also maintains colonial enclaves in Morocco.

"Anti-Terror" Laws Target Labor, Immigrants and Minorities

While striking a pose against the Iraq war, Zapatero speaks for the imperialist interests of America's European rivals, led by France and Germany. They view a UN-administered occupation as a way to enhance their own interests in the region and to get a better share of the spoils than that allotted by the Bush administration, with its ties to American oil companies and firms like the infamous Halliburton, which have been awarded the contracts to pillage Iraq.

The European rulers have embraced the "war on terror" because it serves their interests against workers and the oppressed, especially immigrants at home. Zapatero vowed that "Spain could be counted on for an 'intransigent fight against terrorism'"(*Financial Times*, 19 March). The PSOE's "anti-terror" fight the last time it held office meant launching the fascistic death squads known as GAL (Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación) in the 1980s against Basque nationalists.

Other European states lost no time in opportunistically seizing on the Madrid bombing for a domestic crackdown. France escalated its Vigipirate cop terror plan to "code red" for train stations and airports. The train station in Rouen, a heavily industrial working-class center, was occupied by cops in full riot gear. Over 12,500 people were snagged in police identity-checks in the first few days after the Madrid bombing, a dragnet to harass, detain and deport individuals from France's huge North African immigrant population.

On March 25, European Union leaders created a Europe-wide post of "counter-terrorism coordinator." Tony Blair's Britain wants EU member states "to be more rigorous in tackling money flows to banned organisations. It wants to widen the net to charities, individuals and groups" (*Financial Times*, 19 March). Ultimately, the domestic target for Europe's capitalist rulers is the labor movement, which began to flex its muscle in opposition to the Iraq war with disruptions of munitions deliveries by train drivers in Scotland and Italy and which is resisting austerity attacks on hard-won gains of the labor movement all across Europe.

Down With Repression of Basque Nationalists!

Although immigrants are in the cross hairs of the anti-terror hysteria, there has also been an outpouring of support for them in the wake of the bombing. A 12 March communiqué by the popular-frontist Izquierda Unida (IU—United Left coalition, which includes the old Stalinist Communist Party and has the support of many pseudo-Trotskyist groups) commendably called "to facilitate the immediate legalization of those workers from other countries affected by the crime and who fear expulsion because of their administrative situation. We cannot allow these people to be afraid to cry for their loved ones." Even the right-wing Aznar government felt compelled to grant citizenship to the victims and their families.

Yet the national question is the Achilles' heel of the chauvinist Spanish left. The IU peddled the same lie as the PP government, issuing a communiqué on the very day of the bombing, titled "Democratic Unity Against Terrorism," in which it snarled, "With this fascist-style massacre, perpetrated with repugnant cowardice against hundreds of workers and students, with this act of Nazi barbarism, ETA is trying to end Spanish democracy and to bring to its knees the rule of law.... Izquierda Unida supports all actions by the state security forces leading to arresting and bringing to justice the murderers." IU helps to bind the workers to their exploiters as "Spaniards" against the oppressed Basque and Catalan peoples fighting Castilian Spanish domination.

The International Communist League has steadfastly fought against repression of Batasuna, which is viewed as the political arm of ETA, and ETA itself by the Spanish and the French states. The Basque region represents a classic case of an oppressed nation forcibly denied the right of self-determination, that is, the right to form an independent state. While the heart of the Basque country is in northern Spain, the Basque nation extends into southern France. As our comrades in the Ligue Trotskyste de France declared in protest of the Spanish government's suspension of Batasuna in 2002, which paved the way for the complete ban of the party last year (*WV* No. 787, 20 September 2002):

> "It is the urgent task of the proletariat, particularly in Spain and France, to mobilize against this sinister ban, which not only targets radical Basque nationalists but also sets the stage for repression of any political dissent by workers or youth. ***Down with the ban on Batasuna! Freedom now for the hundreds of Basque nationalists, some of whom have been in prison for many years in Spain and France!***"

While defending Batasuna and ETA against state repression, we Marxists oppose their nationalist outlook as well as the petty-bourgeois strategy of individual terrorism, which is a desperate, losing substitute for and obstacle to the mobilization of proletarian, internationalist class struggle. The elimination of individual representatives of the capitalist state and ruling class does not address the fundamental need to replace the

Spanish elections dealt a blow to Bush's "Coalition of the Willing"—remaining are Britain's Blair and Australia's John Howard.

entire rotting capitalist system itself, which requires the collective struggle of a politically conscious working class. Moreover, the reactionary logic of nationalism leads to appalling acts of indiscriminate terror, such as ETA's 1987 bombing of a supermarket in a working-class suburb of Barcelona, which killed 21 people.

As we wrote in protest of the ban on Batasuna last year (*WV* No. 805, 6 June 2003):

> "The rich history of united working-class struggle in Spain—from the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s to the pre-revolutionary upsurge that followed the death of Franco in 1975—has demonstrated that the resolution of the national question in Spain is inextricably linked with the struggle for workers power throughout the Iberian peninsula. Only a Leninist vanguard party defending this democratic right will be able to unite the Basques with workers throughout Spain —as well as with workers in Portugal and across the Pyrenees in France—in a common struggle for workers power."

For the right of self-determination for the Basque people! Down with "war on terror" repression of labor, the left, immigrants and minorities! ■

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Australia

Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilize Union Power!

We reprint below a 22 February leaflet issued by the Spartacist League/Australia in solidarity with the militant Aboriginal youth of Redfern, Sydney, who continue to face brutal state repression in the aftermath of protests against the police killing of a young Aborigine, Thomas "TJ" Hickey, in February (see "For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!" WV No. 820, 20 February).

The long-felt anger of the Redfern Aboriginal community at their brutal racist oppression erupted on the evening of Sunday 15 February, as Aboriginal youth fought a nine-hour pitched battle with marauding cops. This explosion, which made headlines around the world, was sparked by the death that morning of popular 17-year-old Aboriginal youth, Thomas "TJ" Hickey. The previous day, while fleeing from police, Thomas was impaled on a steel fence, reportedly catapulted from his bicycle. Residents living in the Redfern Aboriginal community known as The Block, told a public meeting that Thomas' bike was struck by a police car. Witnesses described how, contrary to normal medical practice in such cases, police simply wrenched Thomas from the fence causing him to bleed badly. With obscene callousness, they then proceeded to search him, reportedly pinning him to the ground with their boots. It was up to a witness to call for an ambulance.

Thomas, like all Aboriginal youth, had cause to be fearful of the racist cops. Indeed he had been beaten by a group of police only last December in what the cops described as a case of "mistaken identity." Speaking of the police, Thomas' distraught mother, Gail, declared: "They're nasty.... They manhandle our kids, they treat them like dogs.... They've got to stop chasing our kids and hurting our kids" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 February).

Immediately following Thomas' death the police waged a series of vile provocations against the Aboriginal community. As early as midday on Sunday locals say patrolling police taunted Aboriginal youth with racist epithets. Mobilising to defend themselves, some in the Aboriginal community began pasting up posters with pictures of police and headlined "*Wanted* Child Murderers." The leaflet defiantly stated: "There is a gang of child killers operating in the Redfern area. They can be easily identified as they all dress the same. They are serial killers and will reoffend. Do not approach them as they are armed. Report any you see...."

A woman who has lived in the community for nine years, Victoria Dunbar, described the police provocations that day: "We kept going up [to look] and there were hundreds of them, arms locked, visors down. I've never seen so many police. Finally the kids started yelling, 'C'mon, bring it on'" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 February). Fed up with years of systematic racist terror from the Carr state Labor government's cops, up to one hundred and fifty Aboriginal youth, many of them friends of Thomas Hickey, fought back and defended themselves throughout Sunday evening against phalanxes of police "stormtroops." The Aboriginal youth defended themselves with great tactical nous [savvy]. And this time the strutting arrogant "bluecoats" got more than they bargained for. Up to 50 cops were injured during the clashes.

AFP

Youth in Redfern, Sydney protest racist cop killing of Aboriginal teenager Thomas "TJ" Hickey, February 23.

However, by 1 a.m. on Monday morning some 250 police assembled in riot gear. They attacked and dispersed the Aboriginal protesters using shields and fire hoses and occupied the top of The Block in Eveleigh Street. A number of people have already been arrested and the police, itching for retaliation, are planning a "sweep" of up to 40 arrests—doubtless via gestapo-style raids for which they are notorious in Redfern. David Webb, a cousin of Thomas Hickey, was one of the many who quickly sent his children away from Sydney. He said: "Everyone is taking their kids out.... The TRG [Tactical Response Group] will kick in doors. I don't want my kids around it" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 February). Already police from strike force "Time Piece" have arrested Thomas' 37-year-old aunt, charging her with riot, affray, violent disorder and throwing a missile. She has been denied bail to attend Thomas' funeral. Despicably the cops have also targeted Thomas' 14-year-old girlfriend, April, who was arrested after his memorial service and charged with resisting/hindering police and possession of cannabis. We say: ***Drop the charges now!***

continued on page 11

Cop "Union" Targets Spartacist League of Australia

We reprint below a statement issued by the Spartacist League/Australia, section of the International Communist League, on March 20.

Attention Brothers and Sisters,

We write to alert you to outrageous censorship being carried out against those who defend the embattled Aboriginal people against racist cop terror. Trades Hall in Melbourne has cancelled the Spartacist League's current meeting room bookings at its building, reportedly at the behest of the Police Association.

On 17 March, Spartacist League comrades were refused entry to a room at Trades Hall that we had pre-booked for a public meeting. SL supporters were told that Trades Hall had withdrawn this and subsequent room bookings following a complaint by the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC)-affiliated Police Association regarding the SL's position on recent events in Redfern where we called for working-class defence of Aborigines in the face of mounting police terror. Our bookings include one for an advertised 31 March public forum titled "Solidarise with Militant Aboriginal Youth Against Racist Cop Terror! Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!"

The SL has been holding meetings at Trades Hall for decades. However, on this day our supporters were told that the building manager had ordered that the SL room bookings be stopped. Another person stated that VTHC Secretary Leigh Hubbard demanded the room-booking cancellations, brandishing a letter from the Police Association, which reportedly made the outrageous allegation that meetings at Trades Hall on the Redfern events, and/or flyers advertising them, were promoting illegal activities.

The long-felt anger of the Redfern Aboriginal community at their brutal racist oppression erupted on 15 February following the death of popular 17-year-old Kamilaroi Murri youth Thomas "TJ" Hickey while fleeing the NSW [New South Wales] Labor government's cops. In the wake of the courageous protests, the SL faxed to unions and distributed at work sites a leaflet which declared: "To protest the racist state attacks on the Redfern Aboriginal community, we say the social power of the working class should be mobilised in strikes, walkouts and demonstrations." We received a warm response including from young building workers and Aboriginal people for whom our forthright defence of the Aboriginal people in Redfern struck a chord.

The SL is a Marxist political organisation that openly proclaims its program for a workers republic of Australia as part of a socialist Asia. The smearing of leftist organisations by the police is a sinister pretext for censorship, disruption and repression against all those that would oppose the racist capitalist status quo and constitutes a threat against the multiracial working people. One only has to recall the 1997 exposure of massive Victorian police spying against socialists, trade unions, Aboriginal, immigrant and women's rights groups.

As part of the armed fist of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters, the police are the deadly class enemies of the workers movement and oppressed minorities. They act to try and break strikes and bust up workers pickets such as when mounted cops brutally attacked maintenance workers pickets at BHP Steel in Victoria in June 2002. For the leader of the peak union body in Victoria to bow to the diktats of this police body against an organisation in the workers movement is a gross travesty. What is the VTHC going to do if the Police Association demands that it hand over to the state the names of CFMEU [Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union] building union militants who are being targeted by the courts and the police auxiliary Building Industry Task Force? Who are they going to come after next? Police associations are not unions of workers and have no place in the workers movement. In response to the Redfern events, the NSW Police Association have been campaigning for a "public order-type riot squad" to carry out more vicious racist repression in Redfern.

Instead of embracing the bosses' cops, union leaderships should be mobilising their memberships to defend the arrested Redfern Aboriginal militants and defend the targeted CFMEU and AMWU [Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union] unionists as part of defending the interests of all the working class and oppressed against the racist bosses and their repressive state. In August 1996 at an ACTU [Australian Council of Trade Unions]-called rally in opposition to the Howard government's anti-union legislation and attacks on welfare, CFMEU members and other unionists came to the defence of an Aboriginal contingent which was attacked by the police. This led to the spectacular storming of parliament in Canberra by workers, Aborigines and leftists. The interests of Aborigines, immigrant minorities and those of the working people will go forward together or fall back separately. The police force which attacks workers picket lines and seeks to jail former AMWU leader Craig Johnston for militant actions against notorious union-buster Skilled Engineering is the same police force which bashed Melbourne Aboriginal man Raymond Merritt in a Rodney King style beating. Assisting the campaigns of police organisations to silence defenders of Aboriginal rights is manifestly against the interests of all union members and the oppressed.

We urge fighters for workers rights, Aboriginal militants and all opponents of capitalist state repression to reject the smears of illegality against opponents of racist cop terror and send protest letters to the VTHC demanding that it rescind the attempted ban on the Spartacist League's hiring of meeting rooms at Trades Hall. Censorship within the workers movement acts to choke off the full debate and discussion so vitally necessary for the working class to go forward. And especially at this time, when the "war on terror" and "war on crime" provide cynical pretexts for increased anti-union, anti-Aboriginal and anti-immigrant repression, such censorship only serves the sinister aims of the enemies of all working people. ***An injury to one is an injury to all!***

Send protest statements to Victorian Trades Hall Council, 54 Victoria Street, Carlton South VIC 3053, Australia.

Send copies of statements to the Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia; phone: 612-9281-2181, fax: 612-9281-2185.■

Young Spartacus

Revolutionary Communist Party:

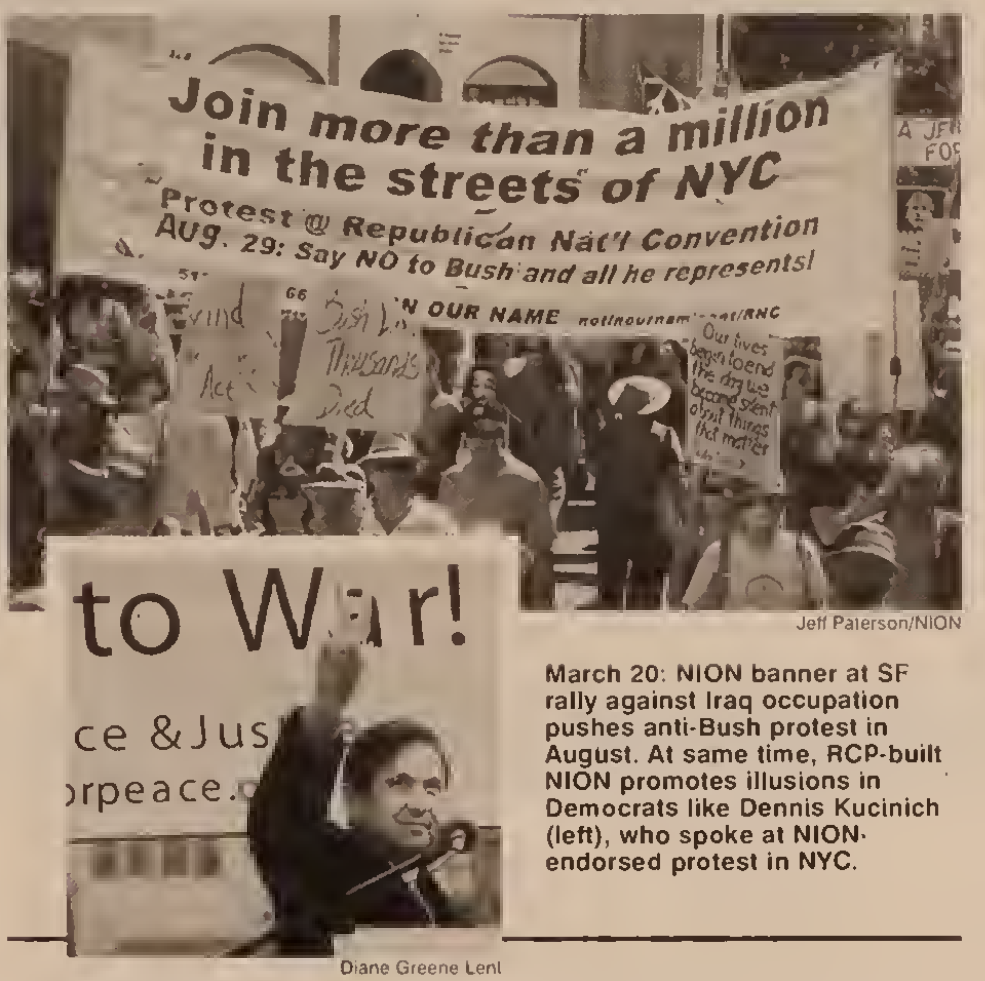
Revolutionary in Name Only

We reprint the following leaflet issued on March 18 and distributed nationwide at the March 20 anti-occupation demonstrations.

On March 20, as protesters take to the streets against the U.S. occupation of Iraq, we in the Spartacus Youth Clubs and Spartacist League will march under the slogans: "U.S. Out of Iraq! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism—For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!" The official leadership of these protests seeks to channel the outrage against the imperialist war against—and subsequent colonial occupation of—Iraq into the dead ends of moral-witness pacifism and electoral pressure politics. For our part, the SYCs seek to win militant activist students and youth to take a side with the peoples of Iraq against the imperialist occupiers, as we did during protests against the Iraq war, when we built revolutionary internationalist contingents that raised the call: "Defend Iraq Against U.S. Imperialist Attack! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers! Down With UN Starvation Blockade!"

Sponsors and spokesmen for the Not In Our Name (NION) coalition, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and its affiliate the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB), also had substantial contingents in the antiwar demos, including youth attracted to the red-flag-waving, "street-fighting," "anti-imperialist" posture of the RCP/RCYB. No doubt many youth around the RCYB felt revulsion at the blatant arrogance of U.S. imperialism in its drive to exert its dominance over the globe, and RCYB contingents included many black and Latino youth, who are daily treated with racist contempt by the ruling class. But for all its militant anti-imperialist posturing, the RCP/RCYB ***refused to defend Iraq*** when the U.S. imperialist rulers, commanding the largest military machine on the planet, geared up for and carried out a war of depredation against neocolonial Iraq, already ravaged by over a decade of United Nations-imposed sanctions. Instead, the RCP/RCYB opted to "unite all who can be united," not least open representatives of the bourgeois Democratic Party and the Green Party, in the NION coalition.

It is no accident that the NION "Pledge of Resistance" does not mention capitalism—the system which is the root cause of imperialist war and which must be uprooted and replaced in order to bring an end to such carnage. Rather, appealing to "peace patriots," NION announced: "We want to build this campaign broadly. It needs to include people who want to 'cleanse the U.S. flag' as well as those who would never under any circumstances fly the U.S. flag" ("Million Globes Campaign," undated, posted at notinourname.net). Lest it repel the Democrats like Maxine Waters who appeared on NION-sponsored platforms, NION spoke the language of bourgeois hypocrisy, mouthing empty pacifist slogans and building illusions that "our own government" can be stopped from "this course of war and repression" through pressure politics.



Jeff Paterson/NION

Diane Greene Lent

March 20: NION banner at SF rally against Iraq occupation pushes anti-Bush protest in August. At same time, RCP-built NION promotes illusions in Democrats like Dennis Kucinich (left), who spoke at NION-endorsed protest in NYC.

Predictably, despite large numbers of people taking to the streets, such "moral witness" as organized by NION and other class-collaborationist lash-ups like Workers World Party's ANSWER and United for Peace and Justice did not stop the war against Iraq. RCP leader Bob Avakian served up the following solace:

> "Let's be real clear: if it weren't for our protests—in unity with people around the world—then Bush would probably be marching into Iraq with the UN fully behind him, draped in an aura of righteousness and legitimacy. Public opinion would be eating out of his hand and believing his every lie.... Bush has not been stopped, but *his freedom of action has been constrained by the people's struggle.*"
>
> —"The Challenge Ahead: We Must Stop This War," *Revolutionary Worker* (*RW*), 30 March 2003

Bush's sagging poll figures may warm the hearts of those in the other party of American capitalism, but his dip in bourgeois "public opinion" is cold comfort for the Iraqi victims of mass murder and occupation.

As Marxist revolutionaries, we stand in the tradition of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, co-leaders of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the only successful workers revolution to date. Trotsky observed how it is impossible to stop war short of shattering the imperialist order in his "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam" (July 1932):

> "To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it."

Carrying the "unite all who can be united" line to its logical conclusion, on 5 April 2003 NION-Los Angeles co-sponsored a campaign rally for Democratic Party presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich. And the RCP's *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper appealed for a "resounding NO!" in the California recall election last autumn, which its readers logically concluded meant voting against the recall of, thus giving backhanded support to, the justly unpopular Democratic governor Gray Davis. We advocated a "yes" vote to recall Davis as a vote of working-class opposition to the capitalist Democratic Party and extended critical support to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidate Joel Britton, whose campaign drew a crude class line against capitalism and war. Now, in the run-up to U.S. presidential elections, the pressure to "unite all who can be united" in order to elect a Democrat will be, if anything, more in play at protests against the occupation of Iraq. In its February 9 posting on the March 20 protests, NION consciously tailors its statement for the anti-Bush handwagon: "March 20 is a day to build our strength for the future—for the most massive resistance ever, more than a million people in the streets of NYC at the time of the Republican National Convention to say NO to the whole Bush agenda!"

Supporters of the RCP/RCYB who consider NION a "revolutionary" alternative to the (other) reformist-led coalitions formed against the Iraq war may discern a contradiction here. On the one hand, there is the red flag waving, calls to "break out," acts of civil disobedience and rhetoric in the *Revolutionary Worker* such as: "The precious resources and organized energy of our resistance must not get *channeled and drained* into a electoral black hole that is fully dominated by the imperialist ruling class" ("Delivering the NO to Bush and All That He Stands For," *RW*, 21 March, posted at rwor.org—emphasis in original). On the other hand, in reality and not in rhetoric, is the namby-pamby pacifist pablum that serves as very thin cover for NION's very own contribution to channeling and draining the anger of youth and others into...the electoral black hole.

NION: The RCP's "People's Front"

Despite the RCP's appropriation of trendy "anti-globalization" jingles such as "another world is possible," there is nothing new in its strategy and practice in today's antiwar movement. It is a strategy not of class struggle but of class collaboration, the subordination of the proletariat in the name of the broadest "unity." In this, the Maoist RCP has taken a page from the "People's Front" (against war, against fascism) policy of the Stalinist Communist Party (CP). Indeed, Earl Browder's report to the Central Committee of the CPUSA on 4 December 1936 may ring a familiar bell: "We can organize and rouse them [the majority of 'the people'] provided we do not demand of them that they agree with our socialist program, but unite with them on the basis of their program which we also make our own."

Anticipating that the CP's class collaborationism would eventually lead it to outright social-patriotism in World War II, James Burnham, then a revolutionary Trotskyist, wrote in *The Peoples' Front: The New Betrayal* (1937):

> "Most significant of all is the application of the Peoples' Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League against War and Fascism, the Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless, Peoples' Front of all those opposed to

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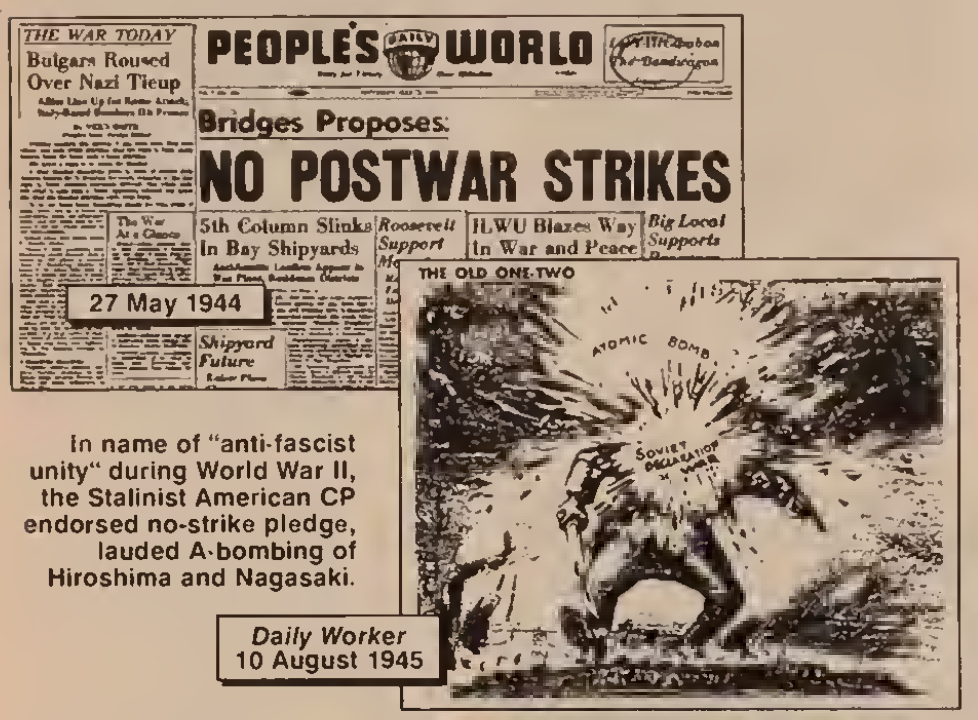
war.' The class collaborationist character of the Peoples' Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order; and, in contrast, maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism, can 'unite' to stop war.... The truth is, of course, that through the Peoples' Front, the Stalinists are making ready to support the government, and to recruit the masses for such support, in the new imperialist war."

Such was the case. In line with the popular front, the American CP directed its supporters, many won through courageous campaigns to organize industrial unions and the fight for black rights, into support for the Democrat Roosevelt in the 1936 elections. When Hitler launched the attack on the Soviet Union (putting paid to Stalin's attempts at a pact with Germany), the CP wrapped itself in the Stars and Stripes, jingoistically goading Roosevelt to prosecute the imperialist "people's war." Once the U.S. was in the interimperialist war, the CP hailed the no-strike pledge of the CIO union tops and engaged in outright strikebreaking at the same time as it removed from its ranks its ethnically Japanese members being sent to the internment camps. Entangled by its "unity" with the Democrats, the CP went so far as to welcome the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast, the Trotskyists were imprisoned for their refusal to support any of the imperialist combatants in the war. Where the Stalinists sold out the fight for independence from imperialism in order to form a bloc with the allied "democratic" imperialists, the Trotskyists championed the liberation of all colonized peoples. Above all, at great personal risk, the Trotskyists fought for and acted on their program for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union.

Magnum

Beijing, 1972: Mao seals anti-Soviet alliance with Nixon even as U.S. imperialism carpet bombed, dropped napalm on Vietnam.

UPI/AP



In name of "anti-fascist unity" during World War II, the Stalinist American CP endorsed no-strike pledge, lauded A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

While the RCP today lacks the working-class base of the Stalinist CP, and lacks association with any workers state power, the fundamental differences between us Trotskyists in the SYC and the Maoist RCP/RCYB remain: ***the road of class independence and proletarian revolution vs. the road of class collaboration and betrayal.*** For RCYBers who consider themselves revolutionaries, it is necessary to understand the history of how the Communist parties throughout the world were transformed from instruments of international proletarian revolution to those of class collaboration. The October Revolution of 1917, led by the Bolshevik Party, was not only the first and only workers revolution in history, but a beacon for the world's working people and oppressed. The Bolshevik leaders were under no illusions that "socialism" could be built in a single, backward country; they looked to and worked for the extension of the revolution to the advanced countries of the West. But the young Soviet workers state reeled under the blows of imperialist encirclement, a bloody civil war and the failure of the German Revolution of 1923. Under these conditions, a conservative, nationalist caste—of which Stalin was the leader—usurped political power, brutally purging the Soviet Communist Party of those, like Trotsky's Left Opposition, who sought to maintain the revolutionary internationalism which animated the October Revolution and the early Communist International. The "theory" which accompanied this Stalinist political counterrevolution was "socialism in one country," which would translate into bloody betrayal of revolutionary opportunities internationally via the popular front, in which the workers were subordinated to their class enemy in "broad fronts" and/or coalition governments. In 1935, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International formally adopted the anti-revolutionary popular front schema. Dimitrov's report to the Congress was explicit: "Now the toiling masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a ***definite*** choice, and of making it today, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism." Indeed, by 1943 Stalin drew the logical conclusion in yet another concession to the "democratic" imperialists and dissolved the Communist International. Further material on this history and the struggle between Trotskyism and Stalinism—including its Maoist variant—is contained in the Spartacus Youth League pamphlet *The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited.*

The RCP's Bogus Anti-Imperialism

Avakian, in "United With All Who Can Be United, in the U.S. and Throughout the World" (*RW*, 7 April 2002), said: "There is the very acute contradiction between maintaining a bedrock position and activity based on proletarian internationalism and still seeking to unite the broadest number possible...." Just what form does the RCP's proclaimed "proletarian internationalism" take? It was over the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan that the RCP tried to cover its blatant refusal *to take a side* and call for the military defense of the victims of U.S. imperialist aggression by invoking "revolutionary defeatism." Thus, *Revolutionary Worker* (28 April 2002) carried an article titled "The Meaning of 'Revolutionary Defeatism'" which intoned: "Revolutionary defeatism does not mean that you should actually *support* the enemy of your government if that enemy and the war it is waging is equally reactionary."

For Marxists, revolutionary defeatism is the policy of revolutionaries in interimperialist wars or any wars between qualitatively equal capitalist states (such as the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s). In such wars, the working class has no side and the working class of each belligerent country should desire the defeat of its "own" ruling class. But this was not the case in the neocolonial military operations led by the U.S. against Afghanistan or the war against Iraq. There is a ***qualitative difference*** between an imperialist power like the U.S., which in its pursuit of profits and spheres of influence exploits the world's dependent countries and is an enemy of the oppressed everywhere, and a tinpot dictatorship like Hussein's Iraq. Imperialism props up bloodsoaked regimes all over the world, and Saddam Hussein was an on-again, off-again beneficiary of U.S. imperialist backing for years. Moreover, the RCP instinctively equates ***military defense*** against imperialist attack with capitulatory ***political support*** to any given force or regime on the receiving end. While giving not an ounce of political support to the reactionary regimes of either the Taliban or Saddam Hussein, the correct Leninist position, and ours, was to militarily defend Afghanistan and Iraq against the imperialists. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War* (1915):

> "For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just', and 'defensive' wars, ***irrespective*** of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

Given the overwhelming U.S. military superiority, we stressed that the chief defense of Iraq was through pursuing international class struggle against the imperialist rulers, first and foremost in the U.S. Just as we fight for the complete ***political independence of the proletariat*** within the imperialist centers, so too throughout the Near East there can be no emancipation of the women of the region, of oppressed national minorities, of exploited workers short of thoroughgoing socialist revolutions which sweep away the imperialist occupiers and the sheiks, colonels and Zionists, and which link up with proletarian revolution in the West. This is the perspective of ***permanent revolution*** as opposed to the failed Maoist-Stalinist formulas for "two-stage revolution" and the "bloc of four classes."

Many of the "progressive" Democrats who campaigned from antiwar platforms made no secret of their preference to put the arsenal of U.S. imperialism to work against the North Korean deformed workers state. Revolutionary Trotskyists stand foursquare for ***the unconditional military defense of the North Korean, Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states***, where capitalism has been overthrown and proletarian property forms remain, despite the bureaucratic Stalinist regimes that undermine these gains. Trotskyists stand for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. This defense includes upholding the right of these states to take any measures to protect themselves against the imperialists, including their right to possess nuclear arsenals. We stood in defense of the former Soviet Union and fought tooth and nail against the capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 which destroyed that military-industrial powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. This is an acid test for any would-be revolutionaries, as those who cannot defend the hard-won gains of anti-capitalist revolutions will not lead new conquests. The world we confront today, as the U.S. ruling class detects little hindrance to its vicious attacks on the workers and oppressed at home and

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The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited

A reply to the *Guardian*. Originally appeared as a series in *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 23-30, 22 June to 12 October 1973

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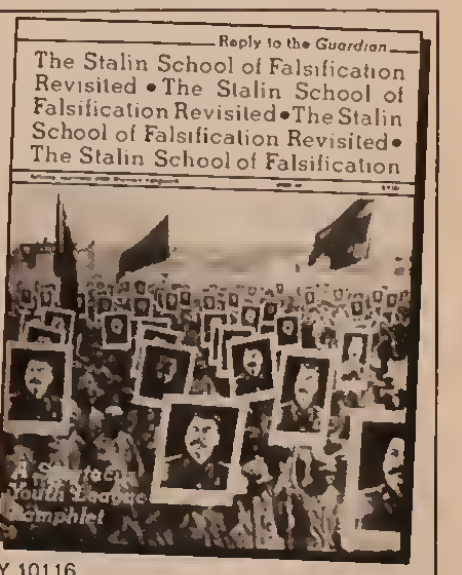


"Life After Bush" or "Dawn of the Dead"?

YDS Conference

Two Spartacist League supporters attended a February 21 plenary, titled "The Future of Radical Democracy," of the Young Democratic Socialists (YDS) "Life After Bush" conference at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. Our intent was to present Marxist politics and expose to all revolutionary-minded youth present how these tepid reformers serve to reinforce the rule of capital. In fact, the YDS tradition is that of the "stinking corpse," as revolutionary Marxist leader Rosa Luxemburg aptly described the reformist social democrats of her time when they betrayed the proletariat by delivering it to the imperialist military machines at the outset of WWI. Ninety years later, the "corpse" still walks the earth, in this country helping to shackle workers to the racist, imperialist Democratic Party.

"Life After Bush" for the YDS and its parent organization, the "State Department socialists" of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), means life with Democrat John Kerry as president. "Any such differences in the primaries must not become obstacles to unity in the fight to depose the Bush regime democratically in the fall elections," counsels the DSA Political Action Committee resolution on the 2004 elections (adopted June 2003). The bottom line for the DSA is: too bad about Dean and Kucinich, now we have to hold our noses and get out the vote for Kerry. And a pox upon that inconsiderate egomaniac Ralph Nader for stealing votes (despite the fact that he wants nothing more than to refurbish the liberal credentials of the Democrats)!

Conference participants, some 200 mostly white high school and college students, attended a series of workshops with titles like "Election 2004: What is to be Done?" and "Between Iraq and a Hard Place: Towards a Democratic US Foreign Policy." As the workshops were breaking up and participants milled around, we talked to some youth and distributed *Workers Vanguard*. We attracted curiosity, as no other left groups were in attendance: around the hall were tables representing only liberal Democratic Party groups like the National Organization for Women, the Working Families Party and *Dissent* magazine.

The highlight of the afternoon plenary session was to be a speech by Princeton professor of religion Cornel West, an honorary chair of the DSA who was recently immortalized in the last two *Matrix* movies as one of the council of elders in weird robes. But first we had to grit our teeth through two *long* DSA speeches; when he finally spoke, West awoke the audience with his theatrical style. His talk was very abstract, citing Socrates, Aristotle, Plato and John Dewey. In the end, his concept of "radical democracy" amounted to teary-eyed liberal humanism, boiling down to calling the Bush gang "fascists" to justify voting for Kerry. Anyone looking for any discussion of socialism from the DSA would have about as much luck as a thirsty traveler seeking a bar in a dry county.

When the floor was opened for discussion, Spartacist spokesman Carla Norris addressed the crowd:

> "Hello, I'm a supporter of the Spartacist League, a communist organization. I came here today to help anyone who has mistakenly come to the DSA thinking that they are a socialist organization; they are not. What they are is a Democratic Party support group, a very thin veneer of left-liberalism on the racist, union-busting Democratic Party, party of war and capitalist imperialism. The DSA exists to *prevent* working-class revolution, just like their historical forebears of the Second International. [Here she was nearly drowned out with catcalls.]
>
> "We of the SL are revolutionaries—not 'Christian Marxists' but the kind of Marxists that Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky meant. We are revolutionaries because we hate capitalism! We hate the police gunning down black kids! We hate the dismantling of hard-won union gains! We hate the U.S. rampaging around the world like in Iraq! The DSA leaflet says, 'The people of Iraq got shortchanged.' The people of Iraq got ***massacred***! We said: Defend Iraq—now we say: Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! [Cries of "What's your question?"]
>
> "So what if Iraq had 'weapons of mass destruction'? We wish they had! Maybe it would have made the U.S. murderers think twice before bombing Iraq."

Norris pointed to a central difference between revolutionary socialists and the DSA: we fight for unconditional military defense of those countries where capitalism was expropriated, including supporting the right of the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states to possess nukes, while the DSA sides with the imperialists against the workers states. She concluded:

> "Here's a question for the DSA: The SL hailed the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan in the late '70s—the only force fighting the murderous Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*. You guys supported the CIA-backed forces in Afghanistan. How do you justify that now?"

Cornel West then interjected to lecture the "democratic socialists" about democracy. West remarked that "the Spartacists have the right to disagree with us," noted that we were the only leftists from another organization present and went on to chide us for taking all of three minutes to comment on the speeches.

After a series of softball questions to which all three panelists responded ad nauseam, a second Spartacist was called on. He raised the key question of the American workers revolution, the fight for black liberation:

> "Today marks the anniversary of the brutal assassination of Malcolm X, a great truth-teller of the black population. X condemned any reliance on the Democratic Party and said: When you vote for the Democrats, you vote for the Dixiecrats. So how come everyone on the panel is talking about the Democrats they supported, when these Democrats are politically to the right of the Democrats X polemicized against?"

The SL speaker explained that the DSA/YDS, in its support to the Democrats, is supporting the racist capitalist system, a system which most viciously oppresses blacks, as well as the working class, women and immigrants. "We in the SL," he continued, "want to get to the root of the problem—we're for the revolutionary mobilization of the working class to smash capitalism in the interest of all the oppressed." He concluded by saying that breaking the working class from religious backwardness and illusions in the Democratic Party "is key to unleashing the power of labor."

West et al. felt constrained not to denounce Malcolm X, so instead they tried to weasel out of the conclusions of the SL speaker's remarks. Outrageously, West implied that because Malcolm X in later life changed his mind about white people being "blue-eyed devils" and broke with Elijah Muhammed...maybe he changed his mind about the Democrats, too. At the same time that a Spartacist yelled from the back, "He did no such thing!", West said that he "respects the Spartacists for their stand against racism and against the KKK," remarking that when the police gun down a black youth, "you only see Al Sharpton out there protesting, and the Spartacists." (As for Sharpton, to get the goods on this black front man for the Democrats, see "Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire" in *WV* No. 822, 19 March.)

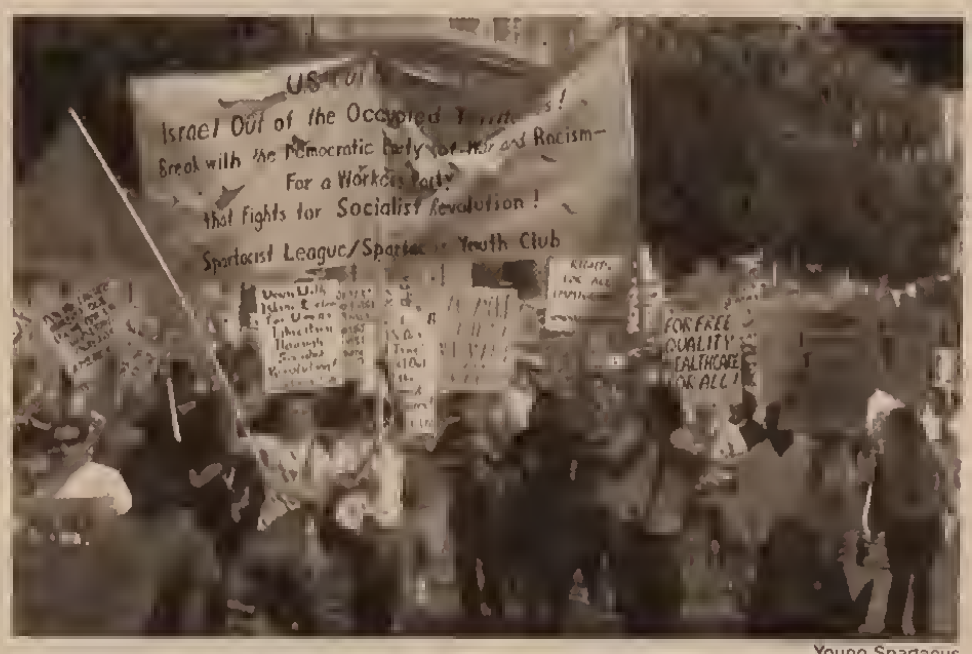
When people began to leave the hall, *Workers Vanguard* attracted a lot of notice, especially the article in *WV* No. 819 (6 February) condemning the recent NYPD killing of black youth Timothy Stansbury. A number of people came up to us afterward to talk, and either disagreed and argued with us or mentioned they liked what we said for providing a revolutionary antidote to the DSA's Democratic Party electioneering. ■

RCP...

(continued from page 7)

abroad, is greatly conditioned by the final undoing of the October Revolution.

The RCP's Draft Programme (Part I, p. 14) speaks of the "great revolutionary achievements of our class in this past century—especially in the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1956 and then in China, where the proletariat seized and held power between 1949 and 1976 and made great advances on the socialist road." The RCP coyly omits the fact that its slavish following of the Beijing Stalinist regime led it to denounce as "social imperialist" the Soviet degenerated workers state, which the Maoists claimed turned capitalist following a 1956 speech made by Khrushchev in which he exposed some of the crimes of Stalin. Afterwards, the RCP tailed every grotesque twist and turn of Maoist China's *bloc with U.S. imperialism* against the USSR—epitomized by Mao's welcome to Nixon in 1972 as U.S. imperialism rained terror upon the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. Such "anti-imperialism," particularly when Washington geared up for Cold War II against the Soviet Union, exposed the Maoists of various stripes within the U.S. as mouthpieces for their "own" rapacious rulers and led to a richly deserved decline of those organizations. As for China, the RCP went from fawning obeisance to Beijing to writing off the gains of the 1949 Revolution because its preferred faction in the Chinese bureaucracy (the "Gang of Four") lost an intra-bureaucratic power struggle in the mid-1970s. This is not ancient history to be easily dismissed: today Washington longs to open China to unfettered imperialist exploitation and plunder, exerting both economic pressure aimed at strengthening the forces of internal counterrevolution and military threats against China. No amount of Avakian-speak can obscure the fact that the RCP, here in the "belly of the beast," is virulently hostile to the defense of China. And while individual RCPers would argue that they would defend North Korea on the basis of defense of a small country against a big imperialist power such as the U.S., the fact is the RCP recognizes no class difference between North Korea and capitalist South Korea. Indeed, capitulating to the imperialist hue and cry over North Korean nukes, *Revolutionary Worker* (25 May 2003) wrote: "Nevertheless, after the death of Mao Tsetung, North Korea mainly relied on the social-imperialist USSR. Now, it has been applying the same tactics of nuclear blackmailing, nuclear gambling and playing with nuclear bombs that Khrushchev developed after he restored capitalism in the USSR."



Young Spartacus

SL/SYC contingent intervenes into March 20 protests in Los Angeles with revolutionary Trotskyist program.

As for the working class, it says a lot about the preoccupations of the RCP/RCYB that during the recent UFCW grocery workers strike in Southern California—a strike which aroused the solidarity of workers around the country, including a work stoppage and mass picket line by longshoremen last November—the so-called *Revolutionary Worker* said nothing until over four months into the battle, when a perfunctory article appeared in its 22 February issue. Those in the RCP/RCYB disturbed by such apathy in the face of a key class battle should understand that this shows that, despite its ritual mention of the proletariat as the gravediggers of capitalism, the RCP's practice relegates the struggle of the workers to one of many "fronts" and offers no perspective for the necessary political struggle within the trade unions against the sellout policies of the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy.

We in the SYCs campaigned for student strike support and financial aid to the UFCW workers, as part of our struggle to win youth and students to the understanding that the working class has the social power to do away with the capitalist system, its wars, racist terror, oppression of women and homosexuals, once and for all. At bottom, what is crucially necessary to unleash this power is a revolutionary program for the working class, a program brought to the class and fought for within the class by a Leninist vanguard party which can break the proletariat and oppressed from their class enemy. The SYCs are dedicated to forging such a party, as part of an international party of world revolution, and the conquest of new October Revolutions. Our road is that of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks; the RCP/RCYB's is that of Chairman Avakian's bankrupt, reformist, Mao-oid shell game. Join us! ■

South Africa...

(continued from page 12)

World" standard of living, many in great opulence, the black masses face deprivation of every basic necessity. Consistent access to clean water is enjoyed by a minority, electricity cutoffs are common, houses are ramshackle and overcrowded, the infrastructure for public medical care, transport and education—substandard when it was new—is crumbling. And let me underscore that this is in the formal urban townships. This is the pinnacle of black life in South Africa.

As you go further afield from the townships, the situation degrades qualitatively. Every major urban center is surrounded by squalid slums called squatter camps. These are some of the fastest-growing communities in the country, with explosive migration from the rural areas and neighboring countries. The squatter camps consist of plywood, plastic and wire shacks. Among the children, malnutrition and waterborne diseases are endemic. Flash fires snuff out hundreds of dwellings in an instant. In the rural areas where almost half the population lives, there is yet another still more brutal kind of life where poverty, disease and isolation combine with a kind of hopeless desolation. Villages serve as holding pens of youth with no future and the old scratching out their final years. While the formal segregation is gone, we call this reality *neo-apartheid*.

The ANC has shown itself to be every bit as capable as the apartheid arch-racists before them in attacking and suppressing the working class. There have been murders on the picket line, such as the ERPM miners strike last year; brutal cop attacks, as in the metal workers strike at Columbus Stainless; and the army called out, as against striking municipal workers in Durban last year. There are myriad attacks on the oppressed every day. Immigrants are rounded up and deported, tortured and set upon by police dogs. Landless people squatting are being brutally removed from land by the state and by hired security thugs. And then we encounter another familiar signpost: with some 187,000 people in jails, South Africa is the fourth most aggressive jailer in the world.

Black people of South Africa are the majority peoples, but are marginalized in their own land. It is all a far cry from the adulation and praise heaped on the ANC by radical liberals and the reformist left during the heyday of the anti-apartheid struggle.

So now what is the way forward? The South African working class is combative and its organizations, such as COSATU, have great social power. There is no lack of militancy. Being against capitalism is not considered a dead letter in South Africa today. Quite the contrary. The key obstacle that holds back the working class in South Africa is still the question of nationalism. The SACP/COSATU leadership keeps the working class chained to its class enemies in the name of "national liberation."

As Marxists, we are for new October Revolutions, for workers revolution. Mobilizing the working class in the struggle for power requires the construction of a revolutionary workers party. The Leninist conception of a workers party is that it must be not merely a party that intervenes in fighting the oppression of the working class under capitalism. To be a party like the one the Bolsheviks built that smashed capitalism in Russia in the October Revolution of 1917—the world's first and only successful workers revolution—it must be a party that fights all manifestations of oppression that exist in capitalist society, that defends the oppressed against all manner of state repression. I want to spend some time this afternoon on some aspects of special oppression, particularly the AIDS pandemic and the murderous oppression of immigrants.

Interlinked with these issues is the central question of national liberation. The ANC and SACP say that there was a revolution in 1994 that was the first stage of the "national democratic revolution." There *was* a fundamental change in the society: a thin layer of black elites now administer the society on behalf of the white capitalist class. But the question of national liberation is still on the agenda in South Africa today. I want to spend a fair bit of time talking about this because the question of national liberation is so critical in understanding South African society, how it is fundamentally different from American society and actually unique on earth.

Glynn Griffiths

Black people turned out in massive numbers to exercise their hard-won right to vote, 1994.

ANC's Criminal Policy Toward AIDS Pandemic

The AIDS pandemic poses the question of the disappearance of the most productive layer of society, young people and working people. South Africa has the largest number of HIV-positive people in any single nation-state in Africa. Approximately five million in South Africa and approximately 29.4 million in sub-Saharan Africa are HIV-positive. The situation is truly catastrophic.

Graveyards full—it's not a poetic image; it is the material truth. Certain municipalities were pursuing education programs in cremation to help ease the crush. There are too many funerals for Sundays or Saturdays only. Page after page of pictures in the *Sowetan* show black youth who have died too young, in the prime of productive life. Life expectancy has plummeted. Thousands of children are now running households.

Particularly if you are a woman, speaking out about HIV can be deadly. The recent case of the horrible murder of AIDS activist Lorna Mlofana in Cape Town is a striking example of the brutality of life for black women in South Africa. She was gang-raped for being an activist and murdered for being HIV-positive. It stirred memories of the murder of activist Gugu Dlamini under similar circumstances, now five years ago.

We put the question of AIDS on the front page of the first edition of our South African publication. This is how central the AIDS question is to the working class in Southern Africa, and we included the story that we wrote about Gugu Dlamini's brutal murder.

The combination of sex and disease usually brings out every kind of social backwardness. The anti-gay bigotries that were unleashed and politically manipulated in the early part of the epidemic in the U.S. are an example. The question is very different in the so-called Third World. Around the world, imperialism creates societies of combined and uneven development. While the most advanced technologies and processes are brought in to maximize profits, the underlying and often backward social relations are managed, channeled to serve the interests of the capitalist order. In South Africa, you have the most sophisticated platinum mining and refining technologies in the world, and alongside this you have social relations from another age—witchcraft and other dangerous superstitions, female genital mutilation in some communities. And the ANC has part of its political base in such rural communities—and among tribal headmen—where these traditions are passed down.

In South Africa, the question of AIDS is the question of women's oppression. Disproportionately, this is who is dying. Transmission is mainly heterosexual, and when there is unprotected sex women are the most vulnerable. The migrant labor system, which sets up dynamics of men traveling between urban households and rural families, multiplies the impact. The hold of all manner of religious and social obscurantism adds to the deadly mix. For instance, there is a popular myth that men can cure themselves of HIV by having sex with a virgin. This has contributed to the already very high levels of rape and sexual assault in the society.

AIDS exacerbates the very harsh conditions for black women in the society, where violence and beatings are a social norm. *Lobola*, or the bride price, is found quite universally. Abortion is legal but there are substantial barriers to access, such as money and doctors who will perform the procedure.

The AIDS treatment protest movement led by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) sprang up in 1998 over the question of securing access to anti-retroviral therapies to stop mother-child transmission and to gain access to the cocktail therapies that have so substantially cut mortality rates in the advanced capitalist countries. Protesters have brought international attention to the situation in South Africa.

The ANC neo-apartheid capitalist government is pursuing a criminal policy, pushing anti-science nonsense. They have blocked every effort to bring life-prolonging therapies to the afflicted. They have given credence to "denialists" who argued that the disease was not transmitted by a virus. Ducking and dodging to this day, Mbeki recently intoned that he had never known anyone who had died of AIDS, despite the fact that it is well known that his chief press spokesperson, Parks Mankahlana, died from an AIDS-related disease about two years ago.

The TAC protest movement leadership is ANC-loyal and therefore not anti-capitalist, and this is a fundamental limitation. TAC activists were strongly inspired by the example of Brazil, where the ruling class invested early on in public health measures to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS and later produced anti-retroviral drugs for its population. Their expectation of similar relief in South Africa was not pie-in-the-sky. It would, however, have required the ANC to take on the system of intellectual property rights and the drug companies in a limited way, as did the Brazilian bourgeoisie. But the ANC nationalists did not do so, unwilling in the slightest to upset their imperialist senior partners and

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Anti-Apartheid Movement

1952: Black workers defiantly taking part in burning of hated pass books which made blacks "foreigners" in apartheid South Africa.

Spartacist South Africa

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South Africa...

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fundamentally beholden to the traditionalist tribalist sector of their base.

A recent shift in November 2003 represents a formal change in posture. Now the ANC government says that it will make drugs available, but ***nothing is happening on the ground.*** The drugs are not being distributed at the government health institutions. Anger is mounting because each moment's delay means many more continue to die prematurely. So you have this coming to the surface, like the youth at the recent forum.

The crushing weight of oppression makes all the more impressive some of the women impelled into political life by the AIDS epidemic and the sacrifices of Gugu Dlamini and Lorna Mlofana. I will always remember a TAC protest at the Pretoria High Court where we met a number of TAC women activists who had traveled from Tembisa, the huge township north of Jo'burg. One of these women said, "These ANCers work for the rich; for us they have nothing." Women such as these played an instrumental role in the struggle against apartheid. A revolutionary workers party will fight to win them to the banner of workers revolution.

Our program for the emancipation of women is based on a *socialist reconstruction of South Africa.* We say: Free treatment for all! Free quality health care for all! Free abortion on demand! Down with *lobola* and forced polygamy! For full integration of women into the workplace and equal pay for equal work! We know that providing decent health care for all, education, housing, electrification, clean water, is not going to happen under the capitalist system. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

Murderous Oppression of Immigrants

Now I want to turn to the less well-known but crucial question of the oppression of immigrants in South Africa today. Historically, immigrants have made a profound contribution to building the wealth of the society—in the mines, the fields, the factories. Immigrants continue to be integrated into the South African workforce, particularly in mining. Bordering countries harbored ANC guerrilla fighters and were the target of bloody cross-border raids by the apartheid regime. They felt the brunt of South African-backed right-wing armies of death in Mozambique and Angola.

Immigrants come to South Africa from every place in Africa. The majority of immigrants are from the border states of Zimbabwe and Mozambique, but there are many from Nigeria, Angola, Senegal, Ivory Coast. In a situation where a substantial proportion of the African Gross Continental Product is created in South Africa, and more specifically in the industrial area around Johannesburg, the country will continue to be a magnet for the dispossessed across the continent. Immigrants literally come risking death. Immigrants are routinely devoured by lions in Kruger National Park, which was partly set up along the Mozambique border to deter migrants.

Anger at the lack of progress in the society is being deflected into a chronic, unremitting level of scapegoating of immigrants over jobs and drugs. My partner had the privilege of teaching English to young people from French- and Portuguese-speaking Africa. These youth were routinely targeted for extortionate rents, hassled for bribes by police and singled out as targets of violent crimes. South Africa has earned a reputation as a place of murderous hatreds for immigrants from other African countries. And for this the ANC is responsible. The government runs deportation trains where people are systematically beaten, then stacked like wood on the floors, on the seats, in overhead luggage racks.

Omar Badsha

1985: Dairy workers march in solidarity with bakery workers on strike in Durban. Black labor struggles were key to bringing down apartheid regime.

The COSATU leadership has refused to defend immigrant workers facing deportation, for example, in the mines last year. This underscores the need for a revolutionary leadership of the trade unions which would have seized on such an opportunity to cut against the xenophobia and nationalism and wage a struggle in defense of the miners on class terms. Instead the union tops get on board with the anti-immigrant witchhunt. For example, in 1999 mine workers union leaders called for a moratorium on hiring miners from Mozambique.

In our political work in South Africa, a mark of someone worth talking to was a good position on the immigrant question. Xenophobia and anti-immigrant chauvinism must be combated consciously to build the workers party. Against the attacks on immigrants, we say: Full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and their families! Down with the government roundups and deportations! The labor movement must mobilize in defense of immigrant rights and in defense of immigrants under threat.

The Southern African proletariat exists amid a fantastic wealth of resources and productive power. It is the key to the whole of Africa. Besides making it possible to redraw the map of nations and peoples in line with their just desires, the South African proletarian revolution would bring the material power to begin the transformation of sub-Saharan Africa, laying the infrastructure of modern society to lift it up from a place of endemic poverty, disease and conflict.

Colonial Origins of Apartheid

What is today South Africa was originally colonized by the Dutch East India Company in the mid 17th century. The next 350 years of South African history is the story of segregation in the interests of establishing and maintaining slave-labor conditions by the European colonial settlers over the indigenous people. The unfolding history was in sharp contrast to those colonial societies like the U.S. where the indigenous population was massacred, killed by new diseases or starved to death. The white settler population in Southern Africa did not displace the indigenous African peoples but rather exploited them ever more extensively and systematically over time.

Over time, the Dutch and also French Huguenot settlers moved deep into the continent in places ever more distant from the weak European colonial authorities. In these closed, far-flung and profoundly racist agricultural domains, the only law was the head male, the gun and the rhino hide whip known as the *sjambok*. Literacy was limited to the Bible. Isolated for decades from their European origins, this community took on its own identity, calling themselves Africa's white tribe, the Afrikaners.

The drive to secure agricultural lands and agricultural labor changed fundamentally with the discovery of diamonds and especially the discovery of gold in the late 19th century in a place that would rapidly grow into Johannesburg. Large numbers of English-speaking settlers of all social classes poured in. And the exploitation of black Africans was set to an industrial tempo. Black miners lived in their tens of thousands in segregated, all-male hostels under the boot of a police apparatus. In order to drive men off the land and into the mines, the Land Act of 1913 dispossessed African farmers of all but the worst 7 percent of all land so that they were left little choice but to pursue work in the mines for survival.

In 1948, the Afrikaner-based National Party came to power, displacing British colonial rule, and established as it had promised a social system called apartheid. It was a system of rigid racial categories and segregation so as to foster "racial purity and separate development." So-called "tribal homelands" (bantustans) were set up where all black Africans were supposedly from. All non-whites had to carry the hated pass. If you were in the wrong place at the wrong time without your papers, you could be killed, beaten, jailed or "deported" to the barren bantustans. At bottom, as controlling black labor was the core of the system, all work was regulated by work permits. You had to get a permit to work in your own country.

All of the forces we've touched on conspired to produce a social reality that is unique in the entire world. The large size, social diversity and permanent character of the European settler population in South Africa enabled the exploitation of the non-white toilers on a far broader scale and more intensively than, for example, in British India or French Morocco. The development of South Africa has produced a near-complete overlap between race and class. In South Africa, the struggle of labor against capital is integrally bound up with the struggle of the oppressed black African people against white domination. The proletarian revolution is at once the supreme act of national liberation.

Workers Struggle Against the Apartheid Regime

How was the formal system of apartheid ended? If you want to read a portrait of this period written from the point of view of participants later won to the politics of the ICL, I encourage you strongly to read the articles in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 57 (Winter 2002-2003) based on talks given by comrades Lesiba and Themba. Our understanding that the South African revolution will only go forward by building a Leninist vanguard party is clearly articulated against the backdrop of the great strikes and upheavals of the mid and late 1980s.

As we begin to discuss how apartheid ended and the ANC became the front men for the Randlords, it is important to keep in mind what the ANC was from its inception early in the last century. The ANC was a party that began as a vehicle to acquire the franchise, the vote, for a layer of propertied black men. It was committed to the black elite, nothing more and nothing less. It was during the decades of struggle against the intransigent apartheid regime that the SACP and the left internationally invested the ANC with a veneer of radicalism that it did not possess in its program.

The ANC's strategy all along was to find a negotiated settlement to the advantage of the future black elite. An example of the ANC's strategic orientation was the call in the 1980s to "make townships ungovernable," which involved mobilizing youth activists into impossible clashes with the armed-to-the-teeth apartheid state. Now remember that this was a formidable police state with an apparatus of torture, death squads, informants, heavy weaponry. The deaths of courageous young militants would set off massive protests usually centered on the youths' funerals. More killings by the state, then more protests and so on. It was a means of getting the brutality of the apartheid system on world display in order to appeal to liberal bourgeois public opinion in the Western imperialist centers.

The strategy of pushing divestment had a similar objective—it was a moral appeal to the rulers of Western capitalism. When this strategy had its heyday on American college campuses in the mid 1980s, it was very unpopular to oppose it. But the Spartacists correctly pointed out that divestment schemes were an appeal to imperialism to "do good." It was also potentially harmful to the black proletarians of South Africa, who had the power to struggle against apartheid.

Three critical events brought both the Nationalists and the ANC to the table: a) the growth of a powerful and militant union movement in South Africa; b) the collapse of Stalinist rule, which dried up the patronage and material support that the ANC received from the Soviet Union; and c) the recognition in key circles of the American ruling class that South Africa was approaching a crisis point in terms of ruling the same old way.

The increasing levels of unionization, the strength of organization, the militancy and sacrifice of the South African unions were the critical factors that led all contenders for power to conclude that South Africa would not be ruled in the same way. The State of Emergency in the mid 1980s and the crackdown on the township struggles opened the stage for the work-

Star

Years after the ANC came to power, rural masses continue to live in poverty.

ing class to come into play. 1987 was a particularly crucial year of intense strike activity against the apartheid regime. Railway and postal workers and retail workers went on strike. Workers from 28 gold mines and 18 coal mines, totaling more than 340,000 workers, went on strike under the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers. And these struggles were followed in the subsequent years by still further, even more powerful and comprehensive strikes that brought production to a standstill.

So why didn't the workers triumph? We Marxists sometimes say that while it still holds state power nothing is impossible for the bourgeoisie. In this case, the power of the working class was diverted and used ultimately to install the ANC bourgeois nationalists in power.

The ANC, the party of the black elites and the party looking to cut a deal, said to the masses: "We will be your liberators." And this was where the Stalinist South African Communist Party and its program of class collaboration came so heavily into play. To a working class hungry for both national and social liberation, the SACP promised both, but in strict sequence. This was the "two-stage revolution"—two-stage because the first stage is supposed to be democratic, the second is supposed to be socialist. Time and again in history, we have seen how the first stage is a sham in which the bourgeoisie, aided by the reformist left, reorganizes itself, stabilizes itself in order to hold power. We often say that the second stage is where the capitalists massacre the workers.

In the sharply polarized situation of the day, the missing ingredient was the workers vanguard party, fighting to inseparably link the questions of national and social liberation. Without such a party, the workers always lose. And so it was.

Our line on the 1994 elections was that the "power sharing" deal was a betrayal of black freedom. As we said then, a vote for the ANC—including its Communist Party members and affiliated trade-union leaders of COSATU—is a vote to perpetuate the racist oppression and superexploitation of the black, coloured and Indian toilers in a different political form.

In contrast, the rest of the left internationally, almost in the same language as the hugely relieved bourgeois press, hailed the ANC victory. The *Wall Street Journal* and the Socialist Workers Party's *Militant* had similar headlines. The International Socialist Organization ran the

T. Dollaart

Mozambican refugees scramble to get across South African border. Nationalist ANC continues former apartheid regime's deportations of desperate immigrants.

headline "AMANDLA," that is, "power" (*Socialist Worker*, May 1994). What a cruel joke! These types bear a share of the responsibility for the present conditions in South Africa, and that is why they have become silent about the ANC-run neo-apartheid regime.

For Permanent Revolution in South Africa

If the national question is such a decisive question, then what is our program for national liberation? The centrality of the proletarian revolution in achieving national liberation is a key aspect of the concept and program of permanent revolution. Trotsky wrote in *The Permanent Revolution* in 1929:

> "With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation."

Genuine national emancipation and basic democratic rights, economic and land distribution can only be achieved through the overthrow of capitalism. We are for a socialist federation of Southern Africa to address the question of the many interpenetrated but distinct peoples, respecting the rights of minorities such as the South African coloureds and Indians and those whites who would join in building a society based on genuine equality. Moreover, not all black Africans are from the same community. South Africa is a capitalist state which embraces a number of tribes or pre-national peoples—Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Venda, Shangaan and more. There may even arise a desire for national liberation individually among the diverse peoples of Southern Africa. One thing is sure. The imperialist-drawn borders that divided the Tswana in Botswana and Ndebele in Zimbabwe from their brethren in South Africa will never be redrawn on the basis of national justice under capitalism. It will require workers revolution to resolve these questions.

We are for a socialist reconstruction of Southern Africa to provide housing, health care, education. We are for collectivized agriculture to quench the profound land hunger of the region's rural toilers. This will require that even greater resources be brought to bear. For socialist revolution to survive it must be internationally extended to the imperialist centers in Europe, the U.S. and Japan.

To conclude, let's return to South Africa today. It is a very volatile place. In recent years, workers have struck at the ports, the public sector, phone, at key auto manufacturing facilities, steel, mining, refining, actually in almost every manufacturing sector and against the government. In addition, there have been successful national general strike actions on an almost yearly basis between 1997 and 2002. And from here in the U.S. that has to look pretty impressive. In truth, however, what is impressive is the level of anger on the ground that forces the pro-capitalist COSATU bureaucracy to regulate the pressure, to blow off steam with strike action.

There are profound strains in the Alliance, and this was evident at the COSATU congress in September. Militants who questioned support to the ANC in the upcoming 2004 election and raised the question of breaking the Tripartite Alliance were witchhunted by the COSATU tops policing the ranks for any sign of discontent, and coming down hard. This reflects the disaffections at the base of the union federation. We say that the call to break the Tripartite Alliance is about class independence and represents the beginning of wisdom.

The South African working class needs a revolutionary Trotskyist party, and this is what our comrades in Spartacist South Africa have pledged to carry out! The tasks of this party are different, broader than in the bourgeois democracies, because it must constantly present itself as not only the force of social liberation but as fighting every manifestation of national oppression, of subjugation, acting as a tribune of the oppressed. As we struggle against every remaining illusion in the ANC as a vehicle for national liberation, the question will inevitably come up: So, who will liberate us? *We will. Our class will. That is the program of permanent revolution.*

So, finally, to move to some conclusions for us here, remember that the program of permanent revolution places stiff responsibilities on the American proletariat. The South African working class sees a natural ally in black American workers. We knew in South Africa that if the working class were to succeed in overthrowing capitalism, even if it came close, the masses would be in the cross hairs of U.S. imperialism. The question of the survival of the South African revolution would depend on its extension here. To live up to that responsibility, there is some work that we have to do here to explode this vicious capitalist system from within, and each of you here has a role to play as leaders.

Down with neo-apartheid capitalism! Forward to workers revolution in the belly of the beast! ■

Defend Aborigines...

(continued from page 5)

Free all those arrested! Defend Redfern Aborigines!

The reactionary bourgeois media, notoriously anti-immigrant racist Carr and his cops, and Liberal opposition leader, John Brogden, are now in overdrive fueling and promoting an outpouring of violence baiting and hate against Aborigines in Redfern. Immediately after the incident Carr announced his "full confidence in the way police tackled this incident" while Brogden, with icy racism, called for The Block to be razed. "I'd bring the bulldozers in," he said.

Following the clashes, Carr quickly announced on Monday morning no less than three inquiries, while some so-called Aboriginal "community leaders" sought to stifle the just anger of Aboriginal youth. While accusing the police of provocations, Ray Jackson, Indigenous Social Justice Association president and a member of Socialist Alliance, also outrageously condemned the actions of the Aboriginal militants as "stupid."

In stark contrast, a spokesman for the mourning Hickey family, Lyall Munro, said of Thomas Hickey's death, "as far as we're concerned, it's an Aboriginal death in custody." Speaking to a gathering of some 150 residents on Monday morning, Munro to his credit solidarised with the actions of the Aboriginal youth: "A stand had to be taken and it was taken by some very brave young people..." (*Daily Telegraph*, 17 February).

But to prevail against the might of the capitalist state requires a political program to mobilise the social power of the working class. ***For union/minority/black mobilisations to defend Aboriginal people against racist state terror! The besieged and marginalised Aboriginal people should not be left to fight alone!***

Carr's cops provocatively seek to prevent a proposed march on Redfern police station next Tuesday. To ensure that it goes ahead and to protest the racist state attacks on the Redfern Aboriginal community, we say the social power of the working class should be mobilised in strikes, walkouts and demonstrations. This is no pipe dream. In 1989 when police in Sydney gunned down and killed Aboriginal worker David Gundy, hundreds of building workers downed tools and joined the subsequent protest outside special weapons police headquarters. These workers formed a defensive perimeter around the demo, facing off the assembled cops who would have loved nothing more than to riot against the protesters. Today such union actions would give pause to the vicious NSW Labor government and their police.

It is the same police who assault Aborigines, who also attack anti-racist youth and workers picket lines, like at nearby Morris McMahon factory last year. Last October, thousands of outraged building workers marched through the streets of Sydney following the death of 16-year-old Joel Exner, who died as a result of his boss's failure to provide him with a safety harness. Both Joel Exner and Thomas Hickey are victims of capitalist rule. We fight to weld the social power of the organised working class to the just anger of oppressed minorities forming one giant hammer to beat back the attacks of their common enemy—the bosses and their repressive state with its cops, courts and prisons.

Far from such a proletarian perspective, Socialist Alliance in an 18 February statement call for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which concluded in 1991. This whitewash by the bourgeois state *endorsed* the police and coroner verdicts of "suicide" and "death by natural causes" in all 99 cases it reviewed. In other words all the killer cops walked! Their verbiage about police violence notwithstanding. Socialist Alliance, in pushing the royal commission findings, give authority to this whitewash of state killings of Aborigines and sow illusions in the main force for racist oppression—the capitalist state. It was the Spartacist League who warned from the first that the royal commission would be a whitewash, just as Bob Carr's so-called inquiries will be used to protect the cops and target Aborigines today.

While correctly recognising that the royal commission into deaths in custody was a whitewash, some outraged Aborigines are now calling on individual representatives of federal and state governments, including the NSW Police Commissioner, to conduct an "independent" inquiry by Aboriginal consultants into Thomas Hickey's death. Any inquiry set up by the racist capitalist state can only serve the interests of the ruling class against the interests of the working class and oppressed. The truth of police terror has been repeatedly written in blood for more than two centuries! There is, and can be, no justice from the capitalist state. Indeed promoting illusions in the capitalist state is counterposed to the urgently necessary working class mobilisations in defence of Aboriginal people.

The next day Spartacist salesmen went to Redfern to solidarise with the Aboriginal community. We distributed *Australasian Spartacist* featuring the back-page article "For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!" Key to our perspective is the struggle to break the working class from racist Laborite nationalism and reliance on the capitalist state. Only in coming to the defence of the most oppressed against capitalist rule can the working class liberate themselves. It is urgently necessary to build a Leninist/Trotskyist party, a tribune of all the people, to overthrow this brutal capitalist system through workers revolution. Only then will the desperation and poverty imposed upon the indigenous peoples, and increasingly felt by all, be eliminated once and for all. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

South Africa: Workers Struggle Against Neo-Apartheid Rule

We print below, slightly edited for publication, a presentation by Spartacist League speaker Mo Nair at an SL forum in Oakland on February 28.

In the last week there were two very interesting demonstrations in the Johanneshurg area that speak volumes about South African society as it approaches the tenth year of the rule of the African National Congress (ANC) and with new elections approaching in April.

One was a rally of striking airport baggage handlers. They have been out since December and have held pickets at the Johannesburg and Cape Town airports. Their strike is over wages and working conditions and has faced state harassment and arrests. The company is owned in part by an alliance of so-called "black empowerment" companies, black capitalists who are trying to do what all capitalists do: keep wages to a minimum and keep the flow of profits secure.

As the strike dragged on, with other workers from the same union continuing to work other companies at the airport, the tops at the main national trade-union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), finally called for a protest. The reaction of the workers was absolutely furious. South African rallies usually kick off with call-and-response chants. The speaker will say, "Viva COSATU" for example, and the crowd replies, "Viva." Or they might start with "Phansi (down with) capitalism," and the crowd would call back, "Phansi." Well, on this occasion when the time came for "Viva ANC," the crowd roared, "Phansi" and started hooing, much to the embarrassment and obvious shock of the top union people.

The placards they carried had even stronger stuff. One sign read: "Run, Black Empowerment Passengers, Before We Shoot You." Another said, "No Vote for ANC"; this placard got put on the front page of the paper with the largest circulation in the country, the *Sowetan*, and it has been the talk of the town.

I spoke to our comrades in Jo'burg this week and they also relayed my personal favorite placard: "It Is Bullshit to Vote for the ANC Again." This is actually really funny given the tradition of politeness, and, moreover, it is such an American turn of phrase.

The other demonstration happened on January 25. There was a gathering of an AIDS activist organization that top ANCers were going to address, including the premier of the South African province where Jo'burg and Pretoria are located. It was supposed to be an august sort of audience, but the activists were furious that life-prolonging drugs are not being distributed now even after the government last year agreed to this. So, the youth in the crowd started making placards on the spot. One of them read: "If You Want Votes, Go to the Nearest Cemetery!" Then the singing and "toyi-toying" (defiant marching/dancing) began. The chant rang out: "The black elite is causing this suffering."

These are small signs that point to sharper future confrontations. There is a powerful tradition of struggle in South Africa. We will have responsibilities toward this struggle. I spent the last seven years in South Africa working to help build our party, the South African section of the International Communist League. This was incredibly exciting because I became political around the question of South Africa in the mid 1980s campus protest movement in the U.S. I think what made the struggles in South Africa so compelling was that the country provided a mirror of the oppression and segregation of black people here. There was a lot that you could learn from the struggles in South Africa even from a distance. We would say, "From Soweto to Harlem: smash racist terror!" There was a resonance. It really expressed a link that was so widely felt in American society among black people and leftists.

But now this felt connection has been worn down. South Africa is hardly in the news. The reformist left that used to spend so much time and ink praising the ANC has consciously buried the issue. They hope that their own role in helping usher in the new South African order of continued oppression and superexploitation would be forgotten. The horrors faced by the black masses of South Africa just don't rate because it exposes the reformists. So South Africa has been taken off the radar for many people; but not for the ICL.

Let's start by going back to the 1994 elections in South Africa, which was one of the most dramatic moments in recent world history. If you were there that day, you would have seen black Africans, coloured (mixed race) and Indian toilers—men and women, workers and students, the aged, the sick and the dying (some so ill that they had to be carried to the polls)—waiting in long lines to vote for the first time. The memories of the torture, murders and repression unleashed by the white-supremacist rulers in their efforts to retain power were fresh, but this was a day of great expectations for the future. They were there in hopes that fundamental social change had arrived, not only that they would be permanently delivered from the vile system of formal segregation known as apartheid. They also wanted genuine social liberation, an end to exploitation, and in its place some kind of egalitarian society. Of course, this isn't what happened.

In the late 1980s, in the face of some of the most powerful national strikes ever waged, the South African capitalist ruling class and its imperialist godfathers on Wall Street and in the City of London knew that the society could not be run in the same way, with a tiny white minority holding the political power. So they did a deal with a willing partner to reorganize South African capitalist superexploitation. The bourgeois-nationalist African National Congress was unbanned and promoted and then elected by a huge margin. Its leader, Nelson Mandela, was unquestionably the most popular bourgeois politician on the planet.

The ANC carried the day in the so-called Tripartite Alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. It is an alliance of class collaboration that persists to this day. We called this a nationalist popular front. The working class was tied to the bourgeois nationalists of the ANC, a capitalist party, by its bureaucratic misleaders in the unions and the Communist Party. The result was that first Mandela and now Thabo Mbeki served as the leading political spokesmen for the very same white bourgeoisie that has owned the wealth of the society for the last century, the same racist ruling class that only yesterday had blessed and promoted apartheid butchery.

We in the ICL uniquely warned that a vote to the ANC-led Alliance would be a vote for continued enslavement, while the imperialist capitals rejoiced that the elections and the power-sharing deal had been carried through. We wrote early on that this would be a situation full of profound contradictions.

In our press, we quoted a woman who had voted for the ANC and was willing to wait for a month, perhaps two, to get decent housing, to begin receiving the fruits of labors denied. Now take this one woman's aspirations, multiply by some 20 million, and then defer by ten years, and you get a picture of South Africa today. There is a raging cauldron of failed expectations at the core of South African society for which there is no relief, no solution under capitalism.

Mantu Vilakazi

Treatment Action Campaign

Black labor on strike under neo-apartheid rule: Baggage handlers at four of the country's six airports walked out in December in the longest strike since ANC came to power (above). Treatment Action Campaign march on Parliament in Cape Town to demand life-saving drugs to fight AIDS, 14 February 2003.

Still a Racist Hellhole

South Africa continues to be one of the most brutally unequal societies in the world as measured by the gap between the ruling class and its black front men on the one side and the working class and other toilers on the other. The bottom 50 percent of the population share 3 percent of the national income. The South African bourgeoisie and its senior imperialist partners own gold, coal and platinum mines. They own the infrastructure that generates the better part of the electrical power of sub-Saharan Africa. They own vast means of transport and distribution. They are white and mainly English-derived—though some lesser elements of the ruling class are Afrikaner.

The proletariat is mainly of black African descent. While the white population still lives in the main at a "First

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 824

16 April 2004

U.S. Out Now!

AP

Reuters

Imperialists Carry Out Massacre in Falluja

APRIL 12—In the aftermath of the uprisings centered in the Arah Sunni city of Falluja, in the slums of Baghdad, and in Kut, Najaf and other cities in the Shi'ite south of Iraq, George W. Bush, from an unspecified location in Arkansas, said of his colonial subjects in Iraq: "It's going to take awhile for them to understand what freedom is all about" (*Chicago Tribune*, 7 April). The language of this "educational" experience has been a constant barrage of lies about self-rule and freedom. Its arithmetic has been in the thousands of deaths—over 600 in Falluja alone. The siege of Falluja is the bloody price that the Americans have exacted in retaliation for the killings of four mercenaries ("civilian contractors" in Bushspeak).

The savage U.S. occupation has not endeared the 70 percent of Iraq's population that remains unemployed and mired in abject poverty to their newly won "freedom." Scenes from the last week: AC-130 gunships and attack helicopters firing on heavily populated urban centers; the bombing of mosques during afternoon prayers; missiles fired into residential buildings; tanks mowing down unarmed civilians; bodies littered the streets as Marines rampaged house to house. Marine commander Lt. Col. Brennan Byrne put it right on the line: "Their only choices are to submit or die" (*Newsday*, 11 April). The "liberators" have sparked a widespread struggle against the occupation. The brutal British occupation of Iraq at the conclusion of World War I took three years to accomplish what the U.S. has in months: the unity of Sunni and Shi'ite against the imperialist occupiers—for the moment.

Brutal Occupation Enrages Iraqi Masses

Sahim/AFP

Insurgents celebrate attack on American military convoy outside Falluja. Top: U.S. bomb hits Falluja, April 8. Mosque fills with bodies of victims of U.S. massacre.

The colonial carnage will not end as long as the U.S. imperialist forces, from the "coalition" allies to the 15,000 mercenaries and CIA agents, are in Iraq. They must get out, ***now!*** But the imperialists will not give up their domination of the region until they are forced to by working-class struggle, both at home in the imperialist centers and in the Near East. Bush & Co. have no plan, and have never had any plan, to militarily vacate Iraq. Reportedly the CIA anticipated a Sunni/Shi'ite uprising since January of this year. Subsequently, U.S. occupation chief Paul Bremer's aggressive actions against Falluja and Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr provoked the uprising. In the weeks before the deaths of the four mercenaries in Falluja, construction began on 14 "enduring" bases for the 110,000 U.S. soldiers scheduled to remain in Iraq for "years." Bremer issued an order placing the Iraqi army under the direct command of U.S. Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, while the puppet Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) announced that a U.S.-appointed security adviser would stay in office for five years after the supposed transfer of power to the Iraqi Governing Council on June 30.

Simultaneously, Bremer moved to establish "independent" regulators with essential veto power over Iraqi government ministries while passing a law, unchangeable under the terms of the interim constitution, opening Iraq's economy to foreign ownership—this as the CPA announced that funds for reconstructing Iraq would be administered by the U.S. embassy, the largest in the world, appropriately lodged in Saddam Hussein's presidential palace. What was to be left under the control of the stooge government was the decrepit hospital system, devastated during the more than 12-year-long UN-sponsored blockade that preceded the 2003 U.S. attack. U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, who pioneered throwing poor people off welfare when he was governor of Wisconsin, said that the system could be rehabilitated if they "just washed their hands and cleaned the crap off the walls" (Naomi Klein, *Nation*, 19 April).

Bremer shut down Sadr's Baghdad newspaper, leveled his *sharia* court in Sadr City and arrested one of his leading aides. Not surprisingly, Sadr's photo is displayed in every part of Iraq south of the Kurdish area, including in sectors where the population is both prosperous and Arab Sunni, as well as on the plinth of the statue of Saddam Hussein dragged down by the American military just a year ago.

Perhaps Bremer's thought, if he had one, was to clear the existing obstacles to installation of the provisional government at the end of June. What has been accomplished is that Sunnis, who currently fear a reversal of the terms of

continued on page 10

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On Big Brother in the Skies

24 February 2004

Dear *WV*:

In your otherwise excellent article "Big Brother in the Skies" (23 January) you give the government too much credit when you state that the Orwellian "Total Information Awareness" program was "scuttled amid a huge public outcry." Actually, Congress merely went through the pretense of cutting off funding in order to posture as defenders of civil liberties but allowed the program to continue with a wink and a nod. As the Department of Defense's Inspector General admitted in his report on TIA (12 December 2003), Congress allowed several "components" of TIA to continue.

And now it's been revealed in an AP wire story (23 February) that the government merely shifted the TIA work to other agencies, notably an obscure office "called the Advanced Research and Development Activity (ARDA) that has used some of the same researchers as Poindexter's program."

Their cynicism knows no bounds, and they respect no law which seeks to restrain their power. That is why reformism is hopeless and revolution is necessary.

Mark K.

29 March 2004

To the Editor:

As an airline worker, I very much appreciated your fine article in *Workers Vanguard* No. 818 (23 January) entitled "Big Brother in the Skies." I wanted to add a couple of related points for your readers on how the "war on terror" affects airline workers as well as the flying public.

Since January 2003, a new Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation has allowed the FAA to suspend, without a trial, a worker's license based only on the suspicion of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) that the worker "poses, or is suspected of posing, a risk of air piracy or terrorism or a threat to airline or passenger safety." After protest from various airline mechanics organizations and union groups, this regulation was recently amended by the FAA reauthorization bill of December 2003 to provide "U.S. citizens affected by the FAA/TSA airman revocation rules a hearing [that] is conducted before an administrative law judge whose decision can be appealed to the Transportation Security Oversight Board." Underlining the racist, anti-immigrant nature of the "war on terror," non-U.S. citizens are still subject to the earlier regulation, giving the government the ability to destroy the livelihood of an airline worker without a hearing, an appeal or without even producing evidence to substantiate the allegations. The earlier regulation allows the Feds to label airline workers as "security threats" while giving no due process rights.

Despite the "safety first" rhetoric, this industry puts the lives of airline workers and the flying public at great risk for the bosses' unquenchable thirst for profits. According to a *USA Today* article (1 March), "Airlines face the most severe economic downturn in aviation history." The airlines have responded not just by forcing concessions and gutting the pensions of the workers, but also by attempting to weaken or destroy the unions. Airline workers have a lot of social power, and some sectors have shown militancy like the mechanics at United who repeatedly rejected contracts. That militancy is throttled by the trade-union bureaucracy, which keeps the workers from fighting by supporting the capitalist Democratic Party, pushing national chauvinism, ramming through rotten contracts, bowing before the anti-strike Railway Labor Act and supporting aspects of the "war on terror" such as CAPPS II, which your article underlines.

One of the ways companies try to bust unions is by increasing the "outsourcing" (subcontracting) of maintenance work, especially labor-intensive heavy maintenance, to outside companies both domestically and internationally. These outside companies often hire inexperienced, underpaid or even unlicensed mechanics who don't have the union protection that is needed to stand up to the bosses who try to cut corners. The labor tops place the most emphasis on criticism of "outsourced" maintenance to "foreign" maintenance facilities. This is a convenient way to push national chauvinism and deflect the fact that there are plenty of such facilities in the U.S., and there needs to be a fight for the unions to organize the unorganized workers both domestically and in other countries.

The FAA, which coddles and caters to the bosses, provides even weaker oversight to the "outsourced" maintenance sites. At the same time, airline bosses have resisted tougher maintenance programs such as recurrent training because of cost. According to another *USA Today* article (5 March), there have been "three major airline crashes since 2000 blamed in large part on poor maintenance. In all, 112 passengers and crew members died in the crashes." For the uncrowned kings who run the airline industry, this is a small price to pay.

One of the reasons the bosses are having so much success in attacking the unions is that airline workers are so divided. Those workers fortunate enough to be in a union are organized into different unions depending on their field or company. Also, within the unions there are often tiers, where more recently hired workers get a lower wage scale. There needs to be a fighting union leadership which fights for equal pay for equal work. There needs to be a single industrial union of all workers at all airline companies, from baggage handlers to pilots. The unions must fight to organize non-union workers into the unions. Airline workers should rip up the anti-strike Railway Labor Act that hamstrings the unions.

T. H.

Morals and Class Society

TROTSKY

LENIN

The bourgeoisie and its ideologues, religious as well as secular, teach that morality is based on an immutable set of values. As materialists, Marxists understand that morality, like all ideology, is a product of social development and serves class interests. Bourgeois morality is an essential ideological prop serving to justify capitalist rule. Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky explained how proletarian socialist revolution lays the basis for the rational transformation of society and its moral code.

In order to reach a higher stage of culture, the working class—and above all its vanguard—must consciously study its life. To do this, it must know this life. Before the bourgeoisie came to power, it had fulfilled this task to a wide extent through its intellectuals. When the bourgeoisie was still an oppositional class, there were poets, painters, and writers already thinking for it....

But all the efforts made by the eighteenth century philosophers towards subordinating social and private relations to the rule of reason were wrecked on one fact—the fact that the means of production were in private hands, and that this was the basis upon which society was to be built up according to the tenets of reason. For private property signifies free play to economic forces which are by no means controlled by reason. These economic conditions determine morals, and so long as the needs of the commodity market rule society, so long is it impossible to subordinate popular morals to reason. This explains the very slight practical results yielded by the ideas of the eighteenth century philosophers, despite the ingenuity and boldness of their conclusions....

It is only the seizure of power by the working class which creates the premises for a complete transformation of morals. Morals cannot be rationalized—that is, made congruous with the demands of reason—unless production is rationalized at the same time, for the roots of morals lie in production. Socialism aims at subordinating all production to human reason. But even the most advanced bourgeois thinkers have confined themselves to the ideas of rationalizing technique on the one hand (by the application of natural science, technology, chemistry, invention, machines), and politics on the other (by parliamentarism); but they have not sought to rationalize economics, which has remained the prey of blind competition. Thus the morals of bourgeois society remain dependent on a blind and non-rational element. When the working class takes power, it sets itself the task of subordinating the economic principles of social conditions to a control and to a conscious order. By this means, and only by this means, is there a possibility of consciously transforming morals.

—Leon Trotsky, "Habit and Custom" (July 1923) in *Problems of Everyday Life* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

The "Anarchist" Professor and the Imperialist Stooge

25 March 2004

Comrades:

I have one point to add to the very fine article, "Noam Chomsky: Radical Poseur," reprinted from *Spartacist Canada* in *Workers Vanguard* No. 822, 19 March. As the article points out, for years Chomsky had "been prettifying as an 'alternative' one Ahmed Chalabi, head of what he claims was Iraq's 'democratic opposition'."

Chomsky's Chalabi played a key role in helping make the administration's case for the invasion of Iraq. He introduced Iraqi defectors to American intelligence, portraying them as persons with direct knowledge of the Iraqi government and its programs to build "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD). One of them claimed that the Iraqis hid such programs in "mobile weapons labs," which have turned out to produce nothing but hydrogen for weather balloons. Knowing full well that these turncoats were totally lacking in credibility, Secretary of State Colin Powell, among others, repeatedly cited their assertions as proof that Hussein was concealing his WMD as a pretext for the devastating invasion. In championing the pro-imperialist Chalabi, Chomsky played his role in "manufacturing consent" for the imperialist rape and occupation of Iraq.

Comradely,
Paul C.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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The closing date for news in this issue is 13 April.

No. 824 **16 April 2004**

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, 5 p.m.

April 22: **The Green Party: No Alternative to Capitalist Oppression**

San Francisco State University
Cesar Chavez Student Center
Room C-114, Downstairs
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sfsyc@sfsu.edu

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, 2 p.m.

April 24: **Labor, Latinos and the Fight for Immigrant Rights**

3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Corner of Beverly Blvd. and Vermont Ave.)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK CITY

Tuesday, 8 p.m.

April 27: **China: Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution! For Workers Political Revolution to Oust the Stalinist Bureaucracy!**

Columbia University
116th St. and Broadway
Fayerweather Hall, Room 302
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
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Visit the ICL Web Site:

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Protest Cop Roundup of Turkish Leftists in Europe!

The following protest statement was issued jointly on April 13 by the Comitato di difesa sociale e proletaria (Codispro) in Italy and the Komitee für soziale Verteidigung (KfsV) in Germany, legal and social defense organizations affiliated with the Lega Trotskista d'Italia and Spartakist Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands, respectively. It has been sent to Italy's minister of the interior, Giuseppe Pisanu, and Prosecutor Antonio Miriano of the Perugia prosecutor's office; to German minister of the interior Otto Schily; and to Turkey's minister of the interior, Abdulkadir Aksu, and Prime Minister Erdogan.

We protest the raid and arrests of supporters of the DHKP-C and of the Anti-Imperialist Camp! In coordinated dawn raids on April 1, part of "Operation Thrace" conducted by paramilitary police squads in five European countries and in Turkey, dozens of leftist militants (57 according to *La Repubblica*), most of them Turkish, were rounded up and thrown in jail. They are accused of supporting the DHKP-C (Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Partisi-Cephesi), the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front.

There have been reports of 37 arrests in Istanbul, but persecutions and arrests have also occurred in Greece, Germany and Holland. Feriye Erdal, a DHKP-C militant whose extradition the Turkish government has been seeking for years, has been arrested in Belgium and risks ending up in the hell of the Turkish jails. Er Avni and Kilic Zeynep were arrested in Italy, together with three militants of the Anti-Imperialist Camp based in Perugia: Moreno Pasquinelli, Maria Grazia Ardizzone (Er Avni's wife) and Alessia Monteverdi. Since their arrests, these militants have been confined in isolation, denied access to lawyers, and are accused of "association for terrorist aims" and of "subversion against the democratic order," under the infamous Article 270 TER that originated in the fascist "Rocco Code" and which was strengthened after September 11.

And what are their "crimes"? To have provided lodging, support and assistance to Turkish political refugees (and even to have married or been witness to a refugee's wedding!). As their defense lawyer, Giuseppe Pelazza, said, "At this point, to be incriminated all that is required is to have aided any militant who has problems in his country. It could also be sufficient to have organized a series of conferences with a spokesman of the Colombian FARC, or of the Kurdish PKK, or of [Basque political party] Batasuna." *We demand the immediate release of all the arrested and that all charges be dropped! Freedom for all leftist prisoners! No to the special emergency "anti-terrorist" laws! No to the deportations!*

This continent-wide raid against the Turkish left and its supporters occurs amid a hysterical climate whipped up against Arabs and immigrants by the European bourgeoisies and intensified following the criminal terrorist attacks in Madrid on March 11. It represents a dangerous escalation in anti-left, anti-immigrant state terror. In Italy, Interior Minister Pisanu and the bourgeois press have leapt at the opportunity to insinuate "collaboration" between "groups and individuals" on the Italian left and "international terrorist organizations." On April 2, without any judicial authorization, the police launched a huge "preventative" dragnet to capture 161 North African immigrants who were accused of being "Islamic fundamentalists," most of whom were later released for lack of evidence or thrown into the CPT [special prisons for immigrants] and then deported as "illegal aliens."

The godfathers of the repressive Turkish regime are the imperialist governments of Europe and the United States, who for decades have financed the war against Turkish leftists and the Kurdish people. German imperialism delivered the arms that the Turkish state uses for the suppression of the Kurds. In Europe, the persecution of the DHKP-C is an old story. The Italian Digos [political police] and German secret services collaborated with the Turkish police in hunting down the DHKP-C; Turkish left group Devrimci Sol and the PKK were outlawed in Germany in the early '90s; PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was first arrested in Italy and then delivered by the Greek authorities to the Turkish secret services; not to mention the countless raids and deportations of Kurdish refugees back to torture and death: this is the bloody contribution of "Fortress Europe."

Behind the facade of "democratization," Turkish prime minister Erdogan's "moderate" Islamic government continues its systematic terror against the 15 million Kurds in Turkey that has resulted in nearly two million refugees. Since 1999, 37,000 Kurds have been killed by the Turkish military! Besides being outlawed in Turkey, where dozens of its militants are among the 110 who died during the heroic hunger strikes against the chilling conditions of the Turkish state jails, in May 2002 the DHKP-C was placed on the "blacklist" of organizations deemed by the European Union to be "terrorist," along with the ETA Basque nationalists and the Palestinian PFLP. The "blacklist" is a license for the European police to persecute, arrest and deport supporters of these groups.

Those arrested in Italy have openly carried out their political activity for years. They are victims of a huge espionage operation: *56,000 hours of phone interceptions, 10,000 hours of Internet interceptions, 5,000 hours of bugging, 2,500 hours of shadowing and "intrusions" into private homes!* As *Liberazione* commented (2 April), this was more than the NSA [National Security Agency], "the CIA's big brother," did in order to intercept Soviet communications in the Arctic! Last March in Britain, the government spent some £1 million on an operation to frame up six militants of the DHKC (Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Cephesi—Revolutionary People's Liberation Front), a group which has for some years been actively organizing defense of Turkish political prisoners against the brutal "F-type" prisons and isolation torture. This frame-up failed miserably when the court was forced to recognize the group's legality.

The aim of "Operation Thrace" is clear: to reinforce racist terror against the immigrant communities in Europe, to label as "terrorist" anyone who opposes the colonial occupation of Iraq or who defends the Palestinian people against Zionist terror. Above all, they want to prepare the ground for smothering and repressing working-class struggle against rising poverty, insecurity and unemployment. Despite huge political differences with the organizations that have been targeted, we know that *an attack against one is an attack against all! Freedom for the political prisoners of the Anti-Imperialist Camp and of the DHKP-C! Down with the ban on the DHKP-C! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All imperialist troops out now! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

The Codispro and KfsV will strive to make this case known in the workers movement and we call on the trade unions of Europe and Turkey to mobilize in defense of immigrants and for the freedom of leftist political prisoners.■

Reuters

Italian prosecutor announces April 1 arrests as part of international crackdown on Turkish leftists and their supporters.

Available in Turkish

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International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Adopted in 1998 at the Third International Conference of the ICL.

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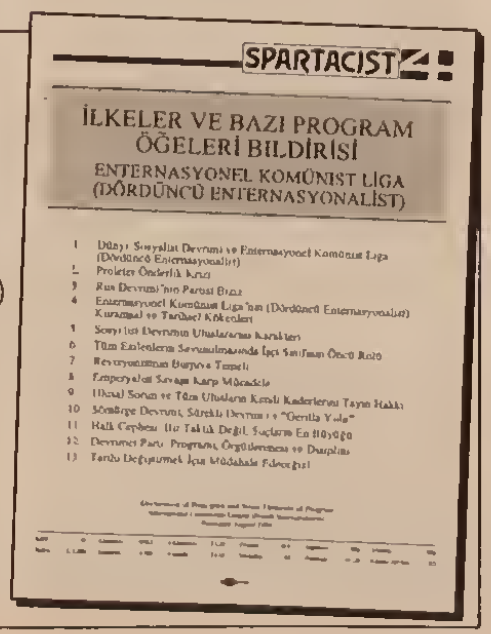
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Spartacist League/SYC Forums

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration:
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Wednesday, April 21, 7 p.m.
First Parish Church, 3 Church St., Harvard Square, Cambridge
For more information: (617) 666-9453
e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com
BOSTON

Stop Bipartisan Attacks on Women's Rights!
Free Abortion on Demand!

Saturday, April 17, 4 p.m.
University of Chicago, Bartlett Gymnasium—Student Lounge
57th and University Ave.
CHICAGO
For more information: (312) 563-0441
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

Revolution vs. Reform
U.S. Out of Iraq! UN Stay Out!
For a Revolutionary Workers Party that Fights for All the Oppressed!

Thursday, April 22, 12 noon
Pasadena City College, Room R218
For more information: (213) 380-8239
e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net
LOS ANGELES

For the Right of Gay Marriage...and Divorce!

Marriage and the Capitalist State

"Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

"On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

"The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital."

—*Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Until the welcome day capitalism *does* vanish, the monogamous family remains the legally enforced social model, at least in Western societies, for the organization of private life in its most intimate aspects: love, sex, bearing and raising children. It is the central social institution oppressing women; anti-gay bigotry flows from the need to punish any "deviations" from this patriarchal structure. Why anyone not under social pressure or economic duress would voluntarily enter the bonds of matrimony is, of course, one of life's mysteries. Nonetheless, it appears that these days the only people who actually want to get married are the only ones President Bush wants to stop: gays and lesbians.

Absolutely, they ought to have the right to marry. And just as absolutely, we socialists fight for a society in which no one needs to be forced into a legal straitjacket in order to get medical benefits, visitation rights, custody of children, immigration rights, or any of the many privileges this capitalist society grants to those, and only those, who are embedded in the traditional "one man on one woman for life" legal mold.

Controversy over "gay marriage" has roiled the U.S. since last November, when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that permitting only "civil unions" for gay couples was unconstitutional, thus establishing the right to gay marriage in Massachusetts. In February the San Francisco mayor ordered same-sex marriage licenses issued, and 4,037 gay and lesbian couples from 46 states and eight countries got hitched before ceremonies were ordered halted on March 11. The Green Party mayor of New Paltz, New York, jumped into the fray, officiating at 25 same-sex marriages. When he was barred by court order from continuing, two local Unitarian ministers took over, only to have criminal charges filed against them by the Ulster County D.A. for solemnizing "unlicensed marriages" in March.

In 1996, Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act which pronounced, "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife." With unholy glee, Christian fundamentalists of all sorts are now pushing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning states from recognizing gay marriage (39 states already refuse to countenance it). Others warn direly that the floodgates of unspeakable immorality are now open. Polygamy is the least of it; Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, dissenting from last year's Supreme Court decision overturning Texas sodomy laws, claimed that decision could abolish bans not only on same-sex marriage, but also "adult incest, prostitution, masturbation, adultery, fornication, bestiality, and obscenity."

President Bush, supporting the anti-gay constitutional amendment, intoned: "The union of a man and a woman is the most enduring human institution, honored and encouraged in all cultures and by every religious faith," complaining that "After...millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization." Meanwhile, the *Wall Street Journal*, beady profit-making eye on the bottom line, featured a piece on "Cashing In on Gay Marriage" (March 11), while vendors presented "Loveland," a "Same-Sex Wedding Expo" at New York's Jacob Javits convention center.

Mala/AFP

Lesbian newlyweds in San Francisco embrace as religious bigots invoke wrath of god.

All this sudden churning of the crazed, hypocritical witches' brew that passes for American political discourse these days, especially on questions involving sex, certainly has its darkly humorous and bizarre side. Partly that's because the messy reality most people actually live in bears little resemblance to the rigid official portraits of Christian moral rectitude this government claims as models of social behavior. But the deeper social issues involved are deadly serious, ranging from the most intimate personal questions to broad areas of responsibility for raising new generations, and how to care for others, whether family, friends or lovers; in short, how "private life" in its entirety is defined and organized.

Workers Must Fight for Democratic Rights for Gays!

Apocalyptic predictions of the end of civilization if gays are allowed to marry are obviously hysterical fantasies; at the same time, gay marriage in itself will not end the often deadly prejudice and pain gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people encounter every day in this homophobic, anti-sex society. But that pain makes it even more important to fight for every possible democratic right, every form of social and political equality that can be wrested from this society.

It is a vital task of the workers revolutionary vanguard to fight for full democratic rights for gays—including, today, marriage rights—and to fight to win the working class to this cause. The Spartacist League has done this since its inception. As Lenin pointed out in his 1902 work *What Is To Be Done?*:

> "Working class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all cases* of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected.... Why is it that the Russian workers as yet display so little revolutionary activity in connection with the brutal way in which the police maltreat the people, in connection with the persecution of the religious sects, with the flogging of the peasantry, with the outrageous censorship, with the torture of soldiers, with the persecution of the most innocent cultural enterprises, etc.?... We must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organize a sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposure of these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel*, that the students and religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life."

Here in the United States, one of the most politically backward "advanced" capitalist countries on earth, saddled with a huge burden of puritanism and religious fundamentalism to boot, there is a lot of backwardness on the gay question.

Even among black workers, historically among the most militant in the proletariat and in general those with the fewest illusions in the "good nature" of this rotten capitalist social order, there is a significant amount of anti-gay prejudice. Much of it is pushed by conservative forces in the black church, although even the black churches are deeply split on this question. As we wrote in our article, "For the Right to Gay Marriage!": "In its extreme, one gets the phenomenon of a black Baptist minister, the Rev. Gregory Daniels, who declared, 'If the K.K.K. opposes gay marriage, I would ride with them' (*New York Times*, 1 March). He might saddle up, but it will be a short ride—the first target of this motley collection of nativist, anti-labor fascists is black people" (*WV* No. 821, 5 March).

In contrast to this myopic anti-gay prejudice is the compassion so many black people feel because they know firsthand the torment and danger of oppression and discrimination. A Massachusetts State Senator from Roxbury put it well: "I know the pain of being less than equal, and I cannot and will not impose that status on anyone else. I was but one generation removed from an existence in slavery. I could not in good conscience ever vote to send anyone to that place from which my family fled." Others can't see that an injury to one is an injury to all, and so in a backhanded way end up in the camp of the racist anti-gay bigots. Black columnist Adrian Walker, writing in the *Boston Globe* (12 February), quoted one clergyman: "Think about Emmett Till, the Scottsboro Boys, and those police dogs in Birmingham—and then tell me they've faced what we've faced. This has nothing to do with civil rights." This reflects in part the pernicious influence of Democratic Party "constituency" politics, where one sector of the oppressed is pitted against another in the scramble for aid from a state which defends capitalist rule.

Of course there are many, and qualita-

"Gays and lesbians getting married—haven't they suffered enough?"

tive, differences between black oppression and gay oppression in this society. Racism is the bedrock of American capitalism, the great fault line in American politics since the founding of the nation on the backs of black slaves. The ruling class consciously manipulates racism to weaken the proletariat. The fight for black freedom will be central to the proletarian revolution in the U.S. For that revolution to succeed, the working class, including its strategic black component, must understand its historic task is to abolish class society in order to open the road to human freedom for *everyone*. And that most certainly includes gays—and everyone else who, however self-defined, rebels against the straitjacket social roles imposed by the capitalist ruling class.

Further, violence against gays, lesbians and, increasingly, transgendered people is a deadly constant on America's mean streets and in the repressive holding pens known as public schools. The grisly 1998 murder in Laramie of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old gay Wyoming student who was kidnapped, beaten, burnt and then left tied to a fence to die, shocked the nation. Though accurate statistics are almost impossible to come by, given that many victims don't come forward because they rightly fear more harassment from cops, school authorities or parents, and because official statistics don't always accurately list "hate crimes," there are still well over 1,000 reported cases a year of violence, sometimes fatal, against gays and lesbians and others deemed sexually "deviant."

A recent Internet search uncovered an article from the Arizona *Tucson Citizen* (23 February) titled "Gays, Jews Top Targets of Hate Crimes Here," which described the June 2002 beating to death of 24-year-old Philip Walsted, who was gay. It was a hate crime, according to police. In January of this year another gay man was found lying on the street, badly beaten, near a gay bar in Tucson, while a gay University of Arizona student was stabbed in 2000. That's just a few stories

Fred W. McDarrah

New York City, June 1969: Young gay activists gather outside Stonewall bar after brutal cop attack which triggered "Stonewall Rebellion."

from one city. According to the Winter 2003 Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Report, there were 27 murders of transgendered people in a 21-month period (2002-2003) in the United States. The point of these few examples is not to "prove" that any social group is more or less hurt than any other, but to indicate that moral regimentation is part of what keeps this unjust society running the way it does.

It was a good thing that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down sodomy statutes in its 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* ruling, because it explicitly overturned the Court's infamously reactionary 1986 decision in *Bowers v. Hardwick* that upheld states' anti-sodomy laws. That decision castigated gays with statements like "proscriptions against sodomy have ancient roots." Chief Justice Warren Burger practically called for a holy war

Spartacists at 1999 NYC one-year anniversary memorial rally for Matthew Shepard (inset), murdered by anti-gay bigots in Wyoming.

WV Photo

AP

against homosexuals, writing approvingly in his concurrence that "Blackstone described 'the infamous crime against nature' as an offense of 'deeper malignity' than rape, a heinous act 'the very mention of which is a disgrace to human nature,' and 'a crime not fit to be named'." This is the legal language that gives cover to gay-bashing.

Gays still don't have full civil rights: they aren't allowed to serve openly in the U.S. military, for example. According to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a gay rights group, in the ten years since Democratic president Bill Clinton adopted the infamous "don't ask, don't tell" policy, around 10,000 service members have been discharged for being openly gay. As we stated when that policy was raised: "Open gays and lesbians have just as much right as anyone else to participate in the armed forces," while raising the classic Marxist slogan of "Not one man, not one penny" for the military ("Gays in the Military," *WV* No. 569, 12 February 1993). This is the tradition of militant Marxism in opposition to imperialist war. At the same time, the military is a microcosm of society as a whole, and so we fight against racist atrocities and discrimination in the armed forces just as we do in the rest of society. The fight to integrate black soldiers fully into the armed forces toward the end of World War II created a potentially powerful base for struggles for black emancipation—and in fact black civil rights activists also fought for homosexual rights in the armed forces then.

Government and Social Control of Women

Many people still would argue, gays should have democratic rights, but why marriage? The capitalist politicians running for president are all dancing around the pretty meaningless "civil union" cop-out, basically catering to religious reactionaries with votes. But isn't marriage in some sense "special," more private, more "sacred" somehow? Not at all. Monogamous marriage is a creation of society, not god (since there isn't one), and it has been used historically as a means of reactionary social control by the ruling class.

We advocate effective consent in all sexual relations and think that what any combination of individuals do in bed is nobody's business but the participants themselves, as long as it's consensual. While defending the right to gay marriage, we also argue that the "marriage mania" represents a fundamentally conservative thrust by the well-to-do petty-bourgeois gay milieu. It's a far cry from "free love" and the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969 to today's marriage ceremonies, PTA meetings and Democratic and Republican Party fund-raisers. In the quest for bourgeois "respectability," gay pride day organizers have viciously banned NAMBLA (North American Man-Boy Love Association) from their marches (thereby fueling the "anti-pedophilia" hysteria which targets all gays) and welcomed contingents of gay cops who spend a good part of their time busting "sex offenders."

Nonetheless, by analogy to our position on the armed forces, we oppose excluding any category of people from access to the privileges and benefits such institutions offer in this society. At the same time, in the course of fighting for these rights, we seek to convince activists that to really resolve women's and gay oppression it is necessary to create a socialist society, in which the current functions of the bourgeois family are socialized: communal childcare; communal kitchens; free, quality health care; and in all ways freeing women from the burden of child rearing and household slavery.

A look at the history of monogamous marriage in the United States reveals its use as a tool of governmental control. A valuable book on this subject, Nancy F. Cott's *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Harvard University Press, 2000), states: "The structure of marriage...facilitates the government's grasp on the populace.... In the form of the law and state enforcement, the public sets the terms of marriage, says who can and cannot marry, who can officiate, what obligations and rights the agreement involves, whether it can be ended and if so, why and how." The following history is largely drawn from that book; quotations from other sources are noted.

One of the book's central themes is how entire categories of people, especially those deemed "inferior," were denied the legal right to marry in many states. This included, most notoriously, black slaves, who of course had no rights whatsoever. And for decades after the Civil War, blacks and Asians were banned from marrying whites. Additionally, as Cott writes, "Prohibiting divergent marriages has been as important in public policy as sustaining the chosen model." Thus polygamous Mormons and Native Americans were forbidden to practice their own forms of "marriage," while attempts at utopian communes made in the years before the Civil War came under massive assault following the North's victory and the consolidation of the American nation under the strengthening grip of industrial capitalism.

In America from the beginning, marriage, though infused with Christian doctrine, was a matter of governmental control, not primarily a religious institution, because the U.S. was established on the formal basis of separation of church and state. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, marriage itself, based on older common law, was seen as "a form of governance.... A man's headship of a family, his taking the responsibility for dependent wife and children, qualified him to be a participating member of a state.... Under the common law, a woman was absorbed into her husband's legal and economic persona upon marrying, and her husband gained the civic presence she lost." This concept in fact continued right up through the 20th century, and was really only dealt a decisive blow, in terms of public civil rights at least, with women getting the right to vote nationally in 1920. However, Congress determined in 1922 that a wife would lose her citizenship if she married a foreigner and stayed in his country for two years; other grounds for female loss of citizenship included marriage to an Asian, a polygamist—or an anarchist!

Within the strict confines of the marriage relationship, male supremacy remained largely intact. Cott describes three U.S. Supreme Court cases, in 1904, 1908 and 1911, all of which essentially upheld the husband's right to control of his wife's body. The 1904 case determined a husband's right to collect "damages" from his wife's lover in a case of adultery, even asserting that the husband's right to "exclusive" sexual intercourse was "a right of the highest kind, upon...which the whole social order rests" (rhetorical excess, to be sure; were this literally true, civilization would have collapsed long ago). The 1908 case justified Congress's ban on bringing women to the U.S. for an "immoral purpose," thus keeping out a man and his mistress and upholding the government's authority to legislate monogamy and punish women who transgressed. The 1911 case involved a woman's attempt to sue her husband for assault and battery. The Supreme Court refused to interfere between man and wife, rejecting the "radical and far-reaching" belief that a wife could sue her husband for injuries "as though they were strangers," and that it was "better to draw the curtain, shut out the public

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SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

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Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

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Box 6441, Main PO
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Public Office:
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Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
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Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

form of consensual sex, as well as gambling, drug use and pornography. Our youth group program back in 1971 said: "Laws against gambling and various sexual practices reflect official puritanism allied to organized religion, which acts as an important ideological pillar of capitalism, convincing the masses there can be no happiness this side of the grave." We say that the government should get out of the bedrooms. As a general framework, people should be allowed to make their own decisions about what they do with their bodies, as long as it is consensual, and we don't make judgments on their morals for doing so. Just about everything to do with sex is stifled, perverted and degraded in the name of bourgeois morality and religion.

Democratic rights are indivisible; you can't defend one without defending them all. But such rights are always limited, temporary and reversible under capitalism and can only be secured through determined class struggle and, finally, through working-class state power. By appealing to and relying on the reactionary bourgeois state in the name of the Democratic Party, the liberals and feminists and the various reformists who claim to support legal abortion, in fact, have paved the way to defeat after defeat. Every struggle for democratic rights, if it is to lead to the liberation of all the oppressed, must be linked to the struggle for *full independence of the working class from the capitalist state* and the destruction of capitalist class rule. This means we fight for every genuine reform possible by using the methods of class struggle that will transform the working class into a class conscious of its historic mission to liberate humanity.

I want to make this point about the centrality of the working class very concrete. For the last five months, upwards of 60,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union were on strike or locked out in Southern California, fighting to defend their benefits and wages and against multi-tier pay schemes. The right to health care was a central issue in this strike and one of the reasons this strike was popular and supported by broad sectors of the population.

Women, men, black, white, Latino and Asian workers were determined to hold out and walked picket lines together, fought off scabs and sacrificed their personal well-being to struggle for a decent life. Standing side by side on a picket line in joint action lays the basis for transcending the divisions and prejudices that the ruling class foments every day. The workers were not lacking in determination. Nonetheless, a losing contract was shoved down their throats a couple of weeks ago by the treacherous, pro-capitalist union leadership which played by the bosses' rules.

In fear of the class struggle that would sweep them away in its wake, the union leadership in this country has, for the last several decades, derailed militant strikes with "corporate campaigns" and lawsuits. The workers are disarmed by their misleaders' acceptance of the capitalist system of profit, their acceptance of the labor laws issued by the bosses' government and courts and by their program of class collaboration with the capitalists, expressed chiefly through political support for the Democratic Party. If the UFCW strike had been won by the workers exercising their power to shut down all business as usual, and if broad sections of the multiracial working class had been mobilized to come out in solidarity, then that victory would have done more for the fight for health care, for abortion rights, for gay rights, black and immigrant workers' rights and women's rights than a dozen Democratic Party-dominated rallies in Washington.

Our task is to build the revolutionary anti-capitalist leadership that is so desperately needed. In 1902 the Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in *What Is To Be Done?* that a revolutionary party that can lead the working class to victory must be "the tribune of the people...able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects...able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

Reuters

Lehman/SABA

Democratic president Bill Clinton signs bill gutting welfare in 1996, starving millions of single mothers and their children.

Racism, Class Oppression and "Family Values"

Let's go back to the time of the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. It did not come out of the blue. The upsurge in social struggle in America in the 1950s and '60s cracked the reactionary domestic climate of the 1940s and '50s. In the Cold War period, Jim Crow segregation reigned in the South, while hardened segregation in jobs, housing and education existed North and South. Women were forced out of the wartime factories back into a very romanticized, but in reality isolated, existence of home and housework. "Rosie the Riveter," the icon of the women drawn into the wartime factories, received a lot of backlash even during the war, as an example one magazine wrote at that time that working women "are rejecting their feminine roles. They wish to control their own fertility in marriage, and say they never wanted the children they had." Black women continued to work as they always had in the lowest-paid menial jobs.

The workers and youth who made up the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement challenged legal segregation at the same time that the U.S. imperialists were trying to put on a "free world" face to counter the influence of the Soviet Union and to posture before the rest of the world to cover for the racist oppression of American capitalism. The ruling-class rhetoric against "godless communism" was also used to label the proverbial unwed mother as "immoral" and black pregnancy as "uncivilized."

Rickie Solinger, a feminist historian, makes the point in *Wake Up Little Susie* that the Supreme Court of 1973 that ruled on *Roe v. Wade* (which at the time was two-thirds Republican appointees) was already predisposed to legalizing abortion because of the fabricated hysteria about "the population bomb," which really translated into fear of overpopulation of the non-white peoples of the globe. After the uprising in Watts in Los Angeles in August 1965, government hearings claimed that supposed overpopulation would "worsen the United States unemployment problem, greatly increase the magnitude of juvenile delinquency, exacerbate already dangerous race tensions...and further subvert the traditional American governmental system."

Solinger also makes the point that the liberals' appeal for abortion rights based solely on the harm done by "back-alley butchers" fed into the established notion that women are helpless victims who must be saved by the benevolent state. So from the get-go, the official leadership of the mass struggle for the basic democratic right of abortion posed their demand in the context of begging the state to be the protector.

Indymedia

January 31 rally in support of UFCW grocery workers strike, Inglewood, California. Defense of health benefits was central goal of five-month strike.

In many ways, access to a safe abortion was most often an economic issue, not a legal issue. One abortion provider wrote about that period: "It had to do with economies...those who could afford it would be off to London or Puerto Rico or Mexico, although even there they'd sometimes run into shabby practices.... Or sometimes another out would be finding and paying psychiatrists to swear she was suicidal; she would jump out the window if the pregnancy continued. And of course in some instances that was absolutely true, and in some instances it wasn't...it was very soon obvious to me that the fundamental issue here about abortion was never legality or illegality but basically whom you knew and how much you could pay" (quoted in Shirley L. Radl, *Over Our Live Bodies*, 1989).

What the liberals have never and will never raise is that the real butcher then and today is the capitalist state. That's what kills poor women. Transforming the fight for abortion rights into a sanitized "pro-choice" movement with the catch phrase "Who decides?" represented a denial of the class and race oppression that makes "choice" meaningless for the masses of impoverished women and youth. NARAL Pro-Choice America, at one time known as the National Abortion Rights Action League, has gone through multiple name changes over the years, and they have consciously deep-sixed the word "abortion" to appease the right-wingers, operating on their terrain and seeking to be as acceptable as possible.

William Saletan's recent book, *Bearing Right*, documents how the liberals and bourgeois feminists of NARAL, NOW [National Organization for Women] and Planned Parenthood have spent 20 years accommodating and backtracking on full abortion rights, lobbying and campaigning, paving the way for one defeat after another. The book, however, buries among the details of failed campaigns the fact that from the beginning the liberals and reformists narrowed their demand to solely *legalizing* abortion in order to preserve access to abortion for *white, middle-class women*. They dumped poor women, and the immediate fruit of this was the 1976 Hyde amendment, supported by Democrats, that denied federal funds for abortions.

Planned Parenthood appealed to the anti-abortion and anti-welfare bigots by raising the argument that it was more expensive for the state to raise an unwanted child than to pay for an abortion. They still lost. Their slavish accommodation to the right wing parallels an equally despicable and racist argument that you see in liberal anti-death penalty literature: that it is more expensive to execute a criminal than to give him a life sentence. In America, where racism underpins capitalist rule, the death penalty is a legacy of slavery and represents a genocidal impulse toward the black population. In liberal pro-choice parlance, an "unwanted child" is a code word for "future black criminal."

Since the legalization of abortion, the religious fanatics have only been emboldened by the liberals' embrace of reactionary "family values." In 1992, the media welcomed the ruling in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* because it *didn't* overturn *Roe v. Wade*. What it did do is legalize waiting periods and parental consent laws and opened the floodgates to restricting abortion rights. Rehnquist said: "*Roe* continues to exist, but only in the way a storefront on a western movie set exists: a mere façade to give the illusion of reality.... *Roe v. Wade* stands as a sort of judicial Potemkin Village." We wrote at the time (Saletan mentions this as well) that Planned Parenthood and the ACLU criminally launched the *Casey* suit as a political maneuver calculated to bring on a reactionary decision. The liberals hoped this would heat up the abortion issue and help elect a Democrat. The winner that time was Death Penalty Clinton.

Saletan documents the defeats of the strategy of attempting to elect supposedly

Labor Black League Protests "Sex Offender" Witchhunt

Oakland, California

We reprint below a letter submitted by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense to the Oakland Tribune *on April 6. Father Weeks was released from jail on $50,000 bail on April 8 and still faces frame-up charges.*

The Labor Black League for Social Defense, a fraternal organization of the Marxist Spartacist League, protests the continuing vigilante harassment of Cary Verse, who has now been hounded through three counties, and Father Donald Weeks, jailed for daring to shelter him. From the start of the anti-Verse campaign there was collusion between law enforcement officials, the capitalist-owned news media and vigilante elements. We condemn the *Oakland Tribune* for inciting and City Council President Ignacio De la Fuente for leading vigilante action against Verse. Verse is a black convicted rapist who after serving his full prison sentence was then imprisoned in a state mental hospital, and finally released after he underwent barbaric chemical castration—a throwback to Jim Crow lynch rope justice. This is the strange fruit of California's "Megan's Law" mandating the registration and publication of the names of all "sex offenders" setting up their extra-legal persecution.

Since Father Weeks of St. Patrick's Abbey in Oakland had the courage and decency to provide refuge for this harassed man, De la Fuente and the repressive agencies of the government have spared no effort to discredit and in fact ruin him. De la Fuente sicced the building inspectors on the church, resulting in its eviction. He used a public school and its staff to organize a "protest," including elementary schoolchildren—manipulating fears and prejudices among Latino families against a black ex-con who has never been convicted of molesting children. Then the Oakland Police Department staged a Gestapo-style raid (20 cops, drawn guns) to arrest 60-year-old Weeks, framing him for "sex offenses" 10 years ago, based on the sudden and dubious accusation of a man now 26. Hands off St. Patrick's Abbey and Father Weeks!

We oppose "age of consent" laws, and believe the only guideline that ought to exist in sexual relations is the rule of effective consent, that is, as long as both parties are consenting to the act at the time, nobody, least of all the government, has any right to say they can't do it. These laws aren't to protect children (or anyone else) but to expand the repressive powers of the government. The persecution of "sexual predators" is part of a broader campaign of anti-sex hysteria targeting everyone from gays to minority women to Michael and Janet Jackson.

Blatant collusion between the cops, the media and would-be vigilantes is an integral part of the American injustice system which systematically denies legal rights to whole sectors of the population. Through the racist "war on drugs" a huge proportion of the black American population is incarcerated, often under arbitrarily vindictive "Three Strikes" laws and when released denied voting rights. Jeb Bush's Florida is not the first or only case where an election was won based on disenfranchising black voters!

The anti-Verse witchhunt is of a piece with the massive assault on democratic rights and civil liberties spelled out by the USA-Patriot Act. America's racist rulers aim to condition the population, through the unbridled persecution of those few they label "predators," "sex offenders" or "terrorists" to accept the victimization of anyone the government doesn't like. The so-called "war on terror" is really a war on labor, blacks and immigrants. Democratic rights are indivisible. ***Stop the persecution of Cary Verse! Drop the charges, free Father Weeks!*** ■

CITY, COUNTY COPS STAGE RAIDS ON ABORTION NESTS

Oregon Journal

Some Fight as Police Raid Alleged Abortion Centers

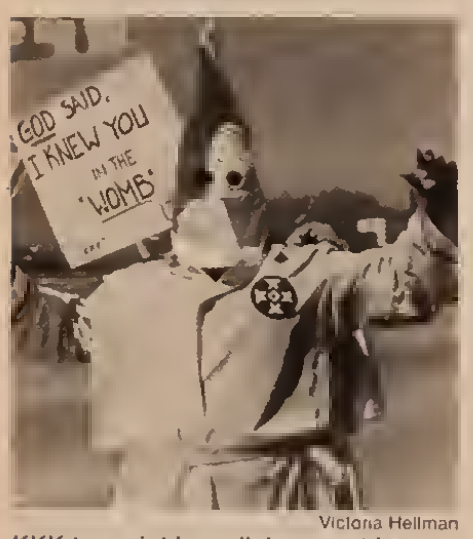
1 Mill Yields 8 Patients

Portland newspaper trumpets 1951 police raids against abortion providers.

"pro-choice" candidates—the fruitless lobbying using PR consultants as if they could somehow hoodwink the right-wing bigots into supporting women's rights. However, he can only posit that the problem with liberals has something to do with bad tactical choices. *Socialist Worker*, the paper of the International Socialist Organization, reviewed the book (27 February), and their main conclusions regarding the feminists are that "we have to stop apologizing for abortion rights and take our movement into the streets." First of all, who's been apologizing? Only the liberal feminists who hold the same guilt-ridden religious ideology as the right-wingers of blame and sin. What is clouded over is that the liberals and their reformist hangers-on all embrace a common viewpoint—that whether lobbying in Congress or marching in the streets, they can win the capitalist state over to the side of the oppressed.

Saletan's story of the legal battles around abortion in 1990 in Louisiana captures the racism of American liberalism. In the midst of a furious controversy over proposed laws to ban abortion, the state executed Dalton Prejean, a black youth who had spent ten years on death row for killing two people when he was 17 years old. He was brain-damaged and retarded. The barbaric death penalty in the U.S. certainly gives the lie to all the "sanctity of human life" rhetoric that comes up around abortion. Since 1985 half of those executed for killings comitted when they were minors have been black.

Saletan makes the point that what resounded on both sides of the abortion issue was the image of Dalton Prejean—the black criminal. Here the bourgeois feminists' resort to reactionary stereotypes of women as helpless victims to sell abortion rights sharply intersected the right-wing anti-abortion forces' defense of "sacred Southern womanhood." "Pro-choice" advocates' focus on the "vulnerable, desperate victims of rape and incest" fed into the racist argument by saying that abortion was the only way to "restore the honor" of women made pregnant by rape.



Victoria Hellman

KKK terrorist brandishes coat hanger outside Dallas abortion clinic.

Everyone knew that raising rape in the South was always used to resurrect the racist myth of the white woman defiled by the black rapist. Saletan writes that even the abortion proponents "detected... the odor of the Scottsboro Boys." While the hardcore "pro-life" fanaties who sought a total ban responded that the so-called "rape" of abortion was as bad or worse than rape by a man, other anti-abortion forces balked at forcing raped women to hear the "stain of their defilement." Governor Buddy Roemer vetoed one bill against abortion because it made no exception for rape and incest and another because it did not adequately "protect" raped women. Nevertheless, feminists portrayed Roemer as a hero for holding out on the rape exception.

For Free Abortion on Demand!

From the inception of our organization, leading up to the *Roe v. Wade* decision and since then, the Spartacist League has actively campaigned for free abortion on demand; free, quality health care for all; equal pay for equal work; 24-hour childcare and for women's liberation through socialist revolution. We have also fought against forced sterilizations. At the same time, we have insisted on the necessity for the working class through the unions to take up the fight for women's rights. We said that legal abortion was not enough to address the oppression of poor working women.

In the early '70s before the passage of *Roe*, the Socialist Workers Party was the main left group trying to keep the protests for abortion rights within the limits of bourgeois capitalism. Operating through their front group WONAAC (Women's National Abortion Action Coalition), they limited their demands and anybody else's who wanted to work with them to a single slogan, "repeal of all abortion laws." The SWP physically excluded us communists from their self-described non-exclusionary mass actions because to them, the word "unity" really meant an alliance with bourgeois feminists, i.e., the Democratic Party. We fought for a revolutionary working-class program that spoke to the deeply felt *objective* needs of the most oppressed women.

The SWP, like the International Socialist Organization of today (and the ISO's predecessors then, too), had occasional socialist speechifying, while on the ground they built "broad coalitions" (another buzzword for "Welcome all Democrats") so as not to frighten away the state Senators and Congressional representatives—but who was fooling whom? Or, as the saying goes, who is the horse and who is the rider? By 1976, the SWP's women leaders had become organizers for NOW.

Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, we actively participated in defense of abortion clinics that were under attack by the fascistic shock troops of the ruling class. As we locked arms with other pro-abortion defenders around the clinics and sometimes took arrests for simply defending a clinic's right to exist, we argued that you have to organize the social force of labor to defeat the entrenched reactionaries—and all their institutions—from the church to the American Medical Association.

The feminists' strategy of begging the capitalist state has *demobilized* mass militant actions in favor of mass *crawls* to Washington to beg the Democrats for crumbs. To this day, if you can find a clinic, you still have to run the gauntlet of religious hate literature thrown at you. It's always been a sign of the degradation of women's rights that clinics performing abortions, a medical procedure, exist as separate physical facilities apart from hospitals—like having separate clinics for hernia operations. The number of abortion providers in the nation has declined steeply in the last two decades, and the number of hospitals providing abortions has plummeted. Fewer than 2,000 physicians offer abortions; nearly *90 percent* of counties in the U.S. have no provider.

Black Women Workers Fight Triple Oppression

I want to make another point about being a tribune of the people. We are not sectoralists who think every oppressed group should organize independently, as if only women should fight for women's issues or whatever group you may name. As a result of the SL-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the KKK from marching in Washington, D.C. in 1982, we initiated a transitional organization linked to our revolutionary organization, the Labor Black Leagues. There will be no socialist revolution in America unless the working class takes up the rights of black people, and our task is to build a bridge from the organized working class to the ghettos.

The program of the Labor Black Leagues includes our demands for free abortion, defense of abortion clinics, down with all anti-gay laws, full citizenship rights for all immigrants, as well as defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack. The LBLs organize to stop racist cop brutality, like the cop killings of Alberta Spruill and Timothy Stansbury Jr. and are in the forefront of fighting for the freedom of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. We participate in and bring to protests a revolutionary program for *all* the oppressed.

It's no surprise that black women would be wary of any kind of feminist-dominated birth control movement given the liberal feminists' confidence in the racist capitalist state. The conservative black church, which provides fake comfort in a brutal racist world, also weighs heavily in steering black women away from birth control. The history of racist eugenics theories intertwining with the early birth control movement of Margaret Sanger, continuing through forced sterilizations in the '60s and '70s (horrifyingly known as "Mississippi appendectomies") demonstrates that the experience for poor women, particularly black women, has been a history of all-sided repression.

Scientific research has been applied to increasing the ease and safety of birth control methods, but who benefits from these advances also tells another story about medical technology and capitalism. By 1939 Tennessee, North and South Carolina were funding birth control clinics geared toward coercing poor black women to not have children, while

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Abortion...

(continued from page 7)

Northern states were still banning contraceptives. In the U.S. in 1990 Norplant was introduced, which is a long-term, surgically implanted contraceptive—certainly more convenient than pills. As soon as it was approved by the FDA, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* published an editorial, "Poverty and Norplant: Can Contraception Reduce the Underclass?" Immediately judges were demanding that Norplant be inserted as a condition for parole for poor women who had been convicted of child abuse. Funds were made available to insert Norplant at public hospitals, but funds for removal were limited.

Depo-Provera injections, another more short-term form of birth control that was often forced on black women in apartheid South Africa as a condition for employment, has also been forced on poor women here. These coerced birth control measures have been introduced for black women at the same time that welfare caps have been initiated—denying benefits for any additional children born while receiving welfare. Mind you, there's a five-year time limit for welfare benefits already.

In America, black people are a race-color caste, forcibly segregated at the bottom of society, last to be hired and first to be fired. At the same time, black workers are strategically placed in the working class, but with the de-industrialization of America, more and more they are viewed as an excess population. It is in the interests of the capitalist class to split and weaken the working class by pitting sections against each other, using black people as scapegoats for all the miseries of capitalism. The history of the regulation of so-called "choice" for black women regarding reproduction illustrates what we mean by a race-color caste. Either the state says you *can't* have a child or health care, or the state says *you have no choice* but to have a child, but you *still* can't get health care.

Religion and Reaction

One front in the attacks against abortion rights has been the issue of "fetal rights." The "Unborn Victims of Violence Act" is awaiting Senate approval granting embryos, fetuses, zygotes, etc. legal status. And although you will be hearing a lot about "Laci's law" in the next period, "fetal rights" laws not only are aimed at overturning the right to abortion but already have been used to charge poor women with homicide. Women are harassed for smoking cigarettes or drinking during pregnancy, while desperately poor women are jailed for using cocaine and their children are seized—in Chicago 95 percent of children in foster care are black. Although women from all classes have always consumed a broad variety of substances, crack cocaine is the drug of *poverty*.

"Crack babies" became the centerpiece of the racist "war on drugs" which escalated under Clinton. In fact, much of the evidence around crack's effects on fetuses, including stories about "impaired human interaction," have more to do with racist stereotypes of criminals than any scientific evidence. It might seem obvious that threatening a woman who uses drugs with seizing her children and jailing her will keep her from seeking the prenatal care which might improve her and her child's health. Working-class women are denied the means to a decent life, and then criminalized. The population of black women in prison has skyrocketed over the last decade.

I just want to touch on one other aspect of "fetal rights" that exposes how capitalism in its decay can truly be a brake on the development of science and progress in general. That is the controversy around stem cell research, a promising area of medical research which has been denied federal funding and has actually caused scientists to leave the country. Bush's sinister Bioethics Council just put out a report that says that medical research that contributes to lengthening life actually endangers the institution of marriage because people will think twice about saying "till death do us part" if they have to live 100 years.

Platforma Spartakusowców

Spartacists at 1992 May Day march in Warsaw, Poland called for workers to fight anti-Semitism and attacks on abortion rights.

Religion is not only a set of backward ideas to comfort people in a cruel world and encourage ignorance, but a ruling-class ideology which kills people. AIDS research was set back for years because of anti-gay prejudices, and this contributed to the worldwide explosion of AIDS. We are for the separation of church and state. We reject *any* notion—and they *all* ultimately derive from religion or spiritualism—that a fetus is a human with a "soul."

Unmarried young people are sexually active for many more years today than were previous generations. Youth trying to obtain abortions are already saddled with parental consent laws. The pending federal "Child Custody Protection Act" makes it criminal for anyone except a parent or legal guardian to take a child across state borders for an abortion. The FDA has now postponed its decision regarding offering the morning-after pill until May because supposedly it needs more data about 16- and 17-year-olds who have used the pills—even though this pill has been available for over two decades elsewhere.

You might expect in rural backwaters of the country where evolution, the foundation of modern biology, can only be taught as an "option" that youth would be forcibly made ignorant. But here in New York City, where the rate of HIV infection has recently been compared to Third World rates, the schools' sex education courses have not been updated for 20 years and the AIDS curriculum has not been updated in 10 years. The same people who oppose funding public health care, welfare and education simply want to tell youth that sex equals death. The AIDS curriculum still states that gay, white men account for the "overwhelming majority" of AIDS cases, despite the fact that blacks and Latinos account for *82 percent* of new HIV/AIDS cases among teenagers. The sex education curriculum was frozen after the hysterical reaction to the "Rainbow" curriculum that included the book, *Heather Has Two Mommies*.

New estimates show that 15- to 24-year-olds account for half of newly diagnosed sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)—more than nine million cases—in 2000. Although the latest figures show a dip, the U.S. has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates of the advanced industrial countries. Since the 1996 "welfare reform" bill was passed under the Democratic Clinton administration, federal funding is granted *exclusively* for abstinence-only-until-marriage "education." Programs that use federal funds must teach that sexual activity outside of marriage "is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects." Planned Parenthood bows to the Christian right by accepting that abstinence should be taught at least as an "option."

In 2002 Judith Levine finally got her book *Harmful to Minors* published after years of rejections. Her simple premise is that sex for minors is not only normal but also positive; that there is a manufactured panic about pedophilia, kidnapping and child abuse and that the state's attempts to protect youth from sex are actually harmful. She points out that "family planning" and "birth control" used to be polite, euphemistic terms referring to making available means to prevent unplanned pregnancies. For the last couple of decades, the terminology has been transformed into prevention of sex *altogether* for youth. There have been tremendous strides in research into less burdensome and safer birth control techniques. At the same time, the government has distributed warnings about condoms' "failure rates" and total fabrications linking abortion to breast cancer. So who will ever see these improvements in an era of virginity pledges?

For Women's Liberation through Socialist Revolution!

The programmatic statement of the Spartacist League/U.S. points out that American feminism was born as a consciously separate movement and split from post-Civil War abolitionists. Its founders embraced white supremacy and campaigned against voting rights for black freedmen. Feminism and all forms of sectoralism share the outlook that the capitalist state can be pressured and shaped to fit the interests of the oppressed: that it's just a matter of reorganizing priorities, or getting more women elected into office. But it's the bourgeois feminists' ruling-class viewpoint that seeks to make capitalism, a brutal system of exploitation, work for them and their privileged position.

The emancipation of women requires a socialist revolution to begin to use the science and technology that has been developed in the most advanced capitalist countries to institute a worldwide planned economy that can change the material conditions of humanity so that production will be for human needs. The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution proved that a successful socialist revolution can conquer through establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, smashing capitalist class rule and laying the basis for the withering away of the state.

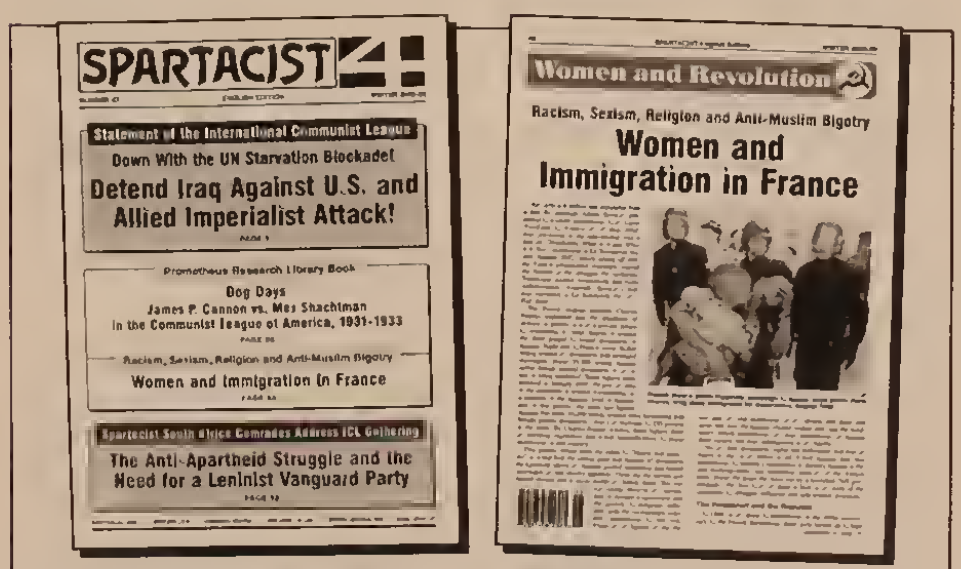
The Bolsheviks abolished all laws against homosexuality and abortion and all laws regulating people's private sexual lives. They made marriage and divorce simple civil acts, and abolished the concept of illegitimacy. They opened the private hospitals to the masses and built public kitchens and laundries. They created residential kindergartens and "children's colonies, where the children either live permanently, or for a considerable period, away from the parents." This last advance is described in *The ABC of Communism*, which was used by the Bolsheviks as a primer for workers and peasants. As they wrote, "Hundreds and thousands, millions of mothers will thereby be freed for productive work and for self-culture. They will be freed from the soul-destroying routine of housework, and from the endless round of petty duties which are involved in the education of children in their own homes."

They had this vision in a largely backward priest-ridden peasant country. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky knew that the only way forward to raising the material conditions of the masses was by extending the revolution internationally so that the most advanced industry could alleviate poverty and liberate mankind. The ensuing isolation of the first workers republic paved the way for the rise of the conservative and repressive Stalinist bureaucracy, which reversed many of the liberating advances the October Revolution had achieved for women and reinforced the backward ideal of the family to inculcate subservience to authority and social conformity.

The 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution threw back living conditions in the former Soviet Union to a level comparable to the time of the tsars. In Eastern Europe, one of the first measures of the restoration of capitalism was the reinstatement of anti-abortion laws. I was in East Berlin just before the capitalist reunification of Germany where the International Communist League was fighting to defend the workers state, and I saw banners protesting the closing of public kindergartens. Today the Russian population is devastated, infant mortality has soared and life expectancy rates have plummeted, and women who used to be technicians and teachers now have nothing. Today we defend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution which ended the hideous practice of binding women's feet. The Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky led the October 1917 Revolution and inspired the world working class, and our task is to fight for new October Revolutions here and everywhere.

I started with a quote on the significance of having a historical materialist worldview. It's not just a tool for historical analysis, but it was developed as a weapon for action, to arm the working class to take power. In 1899 Lenin wrote at the beginning of "Our Programme," referring to the lessons of Marx and Engels:

> "It taught us how to discern, beneath the pall of rooted customs, political intrigues, abstruse laws, and intricate doctrines—the class struggle, the struggle between the propertied classes in all their variety and the propertyless mass, the *proletariat*, which is at the head of all the propertyless. It made clear the real task of a revolutionary socialist party: not to draw up plans for refashioning society, not to preach to the capitalists and their hangers-on about improving the lot of the workers, not to hatch conspiracies, *but to organise the class struggle of the proletariat and to lead this struggle, the ultimate aim of which is the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the organisation of a socialist society.*" ■



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Marriage...

(continued from page 5)

gaze," as an earlier North Carolina court decision put it, on the prerogatives of male brutality within the family circle. It took massive social upheaval and a wave of New Left-derived feminist activism in the 1970s to finally breach what was in fact the husband's right to rape his wife; only in 1984 did a New York court finally overturn that state's marital rape exemption, then followed by others.

Native Americans, Blacks, Asians, Immigrants: Forced or Banned Marriages

The creation of the American nation rested on the backs of black slaves—and on the virtual obliteration of the native Indian population of tribal hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists—resulting in the creation of a bourgeois democracy for white, male property owners. How much more we could have learned about the early history of our species from these indigenous peoples, relentlessly slaughtered and driven onto "reservations," is a question American Marxists must feel keenly. Friedrich Engels' work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), was after all inspired by American anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan's pioneering research into the family patterns of North American tribes. It was this research, in good part, that led to the Marxist understanding that in fact human beings have lived "for millennia" in *non-patriarchal* relationships, in tribal, matrilineal societies in which women were not enslaved within the straitjacket of monogamous marriage, in which children were the responsibility of both men and women. Monogamous marriage is a social invention brought to North America by the colonizers, along with their diseases, their "sacred family" and their slaves.

Municipal Museum, Rochester; Morgan Papers, University of Rochester (inset)

Interior of an Iroquois long house. Research by anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (inset) on pre-capitalist societies informed Friedrich Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.

Oneida Community Mansion House

Oneida community, one of many 19th-century U.S. communes inspired by utopian socialists that practiced alternatives to monogamous marriage.

So the Native American population, when not simply killed, was offered an "enlightened" choice by their overseers: rot on the reservation or give up your "heathen" ways. As Cott puts it, "Most groups—notably the Iroquois, who dominated the eastern part of North America—did not make the nuclear family so fundamental an economic and psychological unit as Protestants did, nor did they generally recognize private property as such.... The federal government consistently encouraged or forced Indians to adopt Christian-model monogamy as the *sine qua non* of civilization and morality." In some cases it was considered that Indians could be "civilized" by converting to Christianity, and marriage of an Indian woman to a white male was tolerated, though in some dozen states marriages between Indians and whites were declared non-valid. The 1887 Dawes Act stole Indians' communal land and undermined their tribal way of life, assigning male family "last names" to Indians (against native cultural tradition), and establishing "individual property-ownership, and further subverted native American women's roles as agriculturists by presuming the Indian male should be the landowner and farmer." Cott writes: "Like ex-slaves and ex-polygamists, Indians were required by the federal government to adopt monogamy as 'the law of social life' to become citizens."

On the other hand, for black slaves in America, legal marriage was out of the question, though slaveholders did encourage childbearing to reproduce and expand the slave population, especially after 1808 when importation of slaves was banned. "Concubinage, which is voluntary on the part of the slaves, and permissive on that of the master,...in reality, is the relation, to which these people have ever been practically restricted," wrote the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1838. Thus the fight for the right to marriage, as an assertion of the right to control one's own body and make a free contract with another human being, was seen as an important aspect of the fight for black freedom.

As it is with just about everything else in America, racism is deeply intertwined with marriage law. Attempts to keep the "white race" "unmixed" were a unique feature of the American colonies since their inception (with the peculiar result that people of all different skin tones and ancestral background are automatically considered "black" if there is even a hint of a black ancestor somewhere). Ever since the inception of monogamous marriage and the family, from ancient times on, laws against intermarriage between different classes aimed to preserve ruling-*class* privileges. Spain in 1776 had such laws, as did the British imperialists in Ireland in the 14th century, for example. But America uniquely developed the illogic of racism, due to its slaveholding history, to such an extent that even after the victorious Civil War that freed the slaves, many states still banned black-white marriage; in Mississippi the penalty was life imprisonment. The miscegenation law was not repealed in Alabama until 2000!

The relationship between slavery and women's subordinate position in marriage was widely noted and utilized by those on both sides of the issues. Southern evangelical Protestant ministers, who published more than half of pre-Civil War pro-slavery tracts, regularly quoted the Bible; a typical claim was that god "included slavery as an organizing element in that family order which lies at the very foundation of Church and State." On the other side, those among the anti-slavery abolitionists and early women's rights advocates who shared the liberal ideals of individual freedom and the view that "self-ownership" was a natural right, saw that both slaves and married women lacked this basic right. As Lucy Stone put it, "Marriage is to woman a state of slavery. It takes from her the right to her own property, and makes her submissive in all things to her husband."

Following the Civil War, successive stages of immigration fed the fires of growing industrialization in the U.S. Here too the government's marriage policies were aimed at social control. Chinese immigrants on the West Coast, who first came in the gold rush, were in demand for mining and railroad-building, but when the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, an explosion of anti-Chinese racism was unleashed. The first federal step to restrict immigration, the Page Act of 1875, was aimed at Asian women, who were supposedly all prostitutes, and required "the U.S. consul to make sure that any immigrant debarking from an Asian country was not under contract for 'lewd and immoral purposes'." By 1913 eight states had laws against whites marrying Japanese or Chinese people.

"Free Love" Utopias and Polygamy

In the stormy years leading up to the great social explosion that was the American Civil War, the last progressive gasp of the bourgeoisie (like the 1848 Revolutions in Europe) in North America, many experimental utopian socialist alternatives to monogamous marriage flowered. There were many "free love" communities established in the U.S., inspired by such utopian visionaries as Robert Owen, Claude Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier, whose profound insight that the status of women is the decisive indicator of social progress inspired further Marxist theory on the subject. The New York Oneida community, founded in 1849 with a pamphlet called *Slavery and Marriage: A Dialogue*, did away with the exclusive pairing of couples, though within a rather formal structure. These groups, though ridiculed and condemned, were not by and large prosecuted before the Civil War, but afterward, when in the name of "consolidating" the nation, a crackdown on most forms of "social deviation" began.

One interesting—and still contemporary—group stands out in all this: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, one of whose founding tenets is the right of men to polygamy, or multiple marriage to many women at once. Right-wingers today throw up their hands in horror at gay marriage, breathlessly bemoaning that polygamy will be next. Well, guess what, it's already here, and has been for over a hundred years, out in Utah and other Western states, where an estimated 30,000 old-style Mormons still practice the sect's early preaching, though the "official" church formally renounced it a long time ago. We believe the Mormons have the right to be left alone, to practice their religion and live their private lives however they see fit. Our position for the right of gay marriage, like the right of Mormons to practice polygamy, stems from our opposition to government interference with the rights of individuals to effect whatever consensual arrangements they wish. We pointed out that American Mormons, including the women, essentially freely choose their practice, unlike in countries without bourgeois revolutions, where women are still little more than property of their patriarchal masters and where polygamous social systems must be relentlessly opposed. As we wrote in "Free Tom Green! Mormon Polygamists: Leave Them Alone!" (*WV* No. 764, 14 September 2001), defending a man convicted of felony bigamy charges:

> "The family structure—whether monogamous or polygamous—necessarily oppresses women. However, not everybody understands the source of their oppression, and people do all sorts of things that are undoubtedly bad for them that the state still has no business throwing them in prison for. As Marxists we understand that the family serves a real social purpose and cannot simply be 'abolished,' even in a workers state, but must be replaced with alternate social institutions."

Women's Liberation, Individual Freedoms and the Fight for Socialism

So, as radical columnist Alexander Cockburn put it, "Why rejoice when state and church extend their grip, which is what marriage is all about" ("Sidestep on Freedom's Path," *CounterPunch*, 20/21 March). Cockburn quotes early ACT UP activist Jim Eigo on the question: "Why are current mainstream gay organizations working to strike a bargain with straight society that will make some queers less equal than others?... Marriage has no more place in efforts to achieve equality than slavery or the divine right of kings. At this juncture in history, wouldn't it make more sense for us to try to figure out how to relieve heterosexuals of the outdated shackles of matrimony?"

It certainly would. And it is the modern Marxist movement which has figured out how to break those shackles, through abolishing the system of private property in the means of production, thus abolishing the need for the bourgeois family structure to pass on such private wealth. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 Russian Revolution, wrote in response to the magazine *Liberty* (14 January 1933) which asked, "Is Bolshevism deliberately destroying the family?":

> "If one understands by 'family' a compulsory union based on the marriage contract, the blessing of the church, property rights, and the single passport, then Bolshevism has destroyed this policed family from the roots up.
>
> "If one understands by 'family' the unbounded domination of parents over children, and absence of legal rights for the wife, then Bolshevism has, unfortunately, not yet completely destroyed this carryover of society's old barbarism.
>
> "If one understands by 'family' ideal monogamy—not in the legal but in the actual sense—then the Bolsheviks could not destroy what never was nor is on earth, barring fortunate exceptions."■

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Women and Revolution

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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

oppression under Shi'ite-majority rule, and Shi'ites, who were dominated by the Sunnis under the regime of Saddam Hussein, today are uniting. The *Wall Street Journal* (12 April) reports: "Residents in many Baghdad neighborhoods signed up to host displaced families from Fallujah and banners and signs are posted at every corner declaring that the Sunni and Shi'ite forces are now unified." Thousands of Shi'ites joined a protest at a Sunni mosque against the American attacks; Shi'ites have donated blood for wounded Sunnis; Shi'ites organized to provide food for Sunni civilians trapped in the sealed city of Falluja without food, water or electricity.

With the evaporation of the Iraqi police and U.S.-trained Iraqi army—one of its four battalions refused to fight in Falluja and returned to the barracks—and with the fig leaf of Iraqi self-rule taking on the transparent qualities of cellophane, two Iraqi officials in the Governing Council have withdrawn in protest. The former Iraqi foreign minister, Adnan Pachachi, a member of the Governing Council and considered by the Americans one of their most trusted allies, denounced the sacking of Falluja. He described the American offensive as "mass punishment.... We consider these operations by the Americans to be unacceptable and illegal" (*New York Times*, 10 April).

It matters not at all what transpires on June 30. The American imperialists will perforce need to tighten their control over Iraq, which will likely promote future uprisings and an increasingly brutal response by its military. In 2002 Israel's Zionist rulers carried out a bloodbath of Palestinians in the West Bank town of Jenin; the Americans have carried out destruction equivalent to several Jenin massacres in Falluja alone, and that comparison is not gratuitous. Writing in the London *Guardian* (9 April), Sami Ramadani reports on "the Pentagon's Israeli-trained special assassination squads" and notes, "the streets of Baghdad, Falluja and the southern cities resemble those of occupied Palestine. Sharon-style tactics and brutality are now the favoured methods of the US-led occupation forces—including the torture of prisoners, who now number well over 10,000."

Democrats Promise a Prolonged Occupation

In the U.S., people are increasingly disturbed by the returning body bags and disenchanted with the repeated bland retailing of only slightly repackaged old lies by Bush, Rumsfeld and Rice in response to the pervasive evidence that the invasion of Iraq had nothing at all to do with terrorism or "weapons of mass destruction," just as the subsequent occupation has nothing at all to do with democracy. This has an impact especially on working people faced with a jobless recovery and attendant attacks on their living standards. Bush and the neocons' delusional projections of an effortless installation of a puppet regime, as simple as opening a McDonald's franchise, are now shattered and the U.S. is in for a long, bloody occupation, moreover with the U.S. Armed Forces seriously undermanned. Given the continued unemployment on the home front, Bush can run for re-election only as a stern and righteous (if slightly stupid) god, a posture that appeals to the reborn Christian right in the Republican Party.

In this context, one would think that Democratic presidential candidate Senator John Kerry would be a shoo-in in November. The Iraq war and occupation have been so closely identified in the public mind with the Bush regime that increasing numbers of Americans now distrust anything that comes out of the government's mouth, and many of those opposed to the occupation have turned to the Democrats. Kerry is in effect now running as a war candidate. In a February 27 address at UCLA, Kerry said, "And to replenish our overextended military, as President, I will add 40,000 active-duty Army troops, a temporary increase likely to last the remainder of the decade." In an interview with *Time* magazine, (7 March press release), Kerry pledged that as president he would stay the course in Iraq. The Democrats, both in the primaries and in the current hearings on September 11, attack Bush for failing to prosecute the "war on terror" with sufficient vigor. This so-called "war" in fact has as its primary thrust an attack on the rights of all—from immigrants to those who would protest the war to workers whose right to strike is under attack. In fact, historically, the Democrats have been the preferred party of war because they feign to speak for the interests of working people.

WV Photo

AP

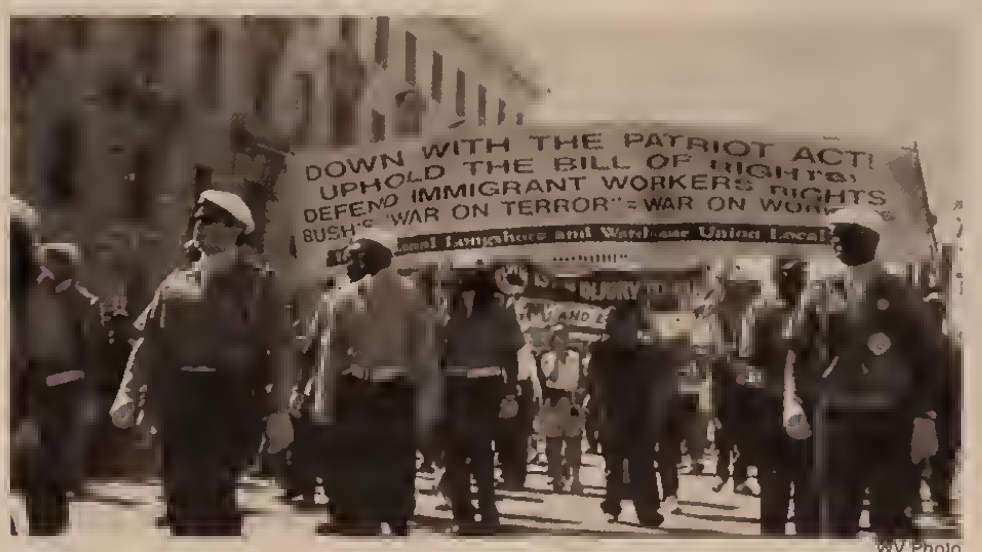
Military families and veterans joined March 20 anti-occupation rally, New York City. Right: U.S. soldier Camilo Mejia courageously opposes occupation, refuses to return to Iraq.

In the aftermath of the 1991-92 destruction of the bureaucratically degenerated workers state in the USSR, the American imperialist rulers, whether of Democratic or Republican persuasion, moved to realize their aspirations to tighten control of the Near East. At the expense of their imperialist rivals, the U.S. rulers seek to control the bulk of the world's oil reserves and to project power throughout the region. Not surprisingly, France and Germany oppose Washington's play for increasing dominance. Also of concern to the U.S. is Russia, which retains its nuclear capacity. Ultimately, however, the imperialists have their sights set on China, intent on the overturn of the strongest of the remaining societies in which capitalism has been expropriated.

"Coalition of the Willing"... Less So

The American military forces have been stretched quite thin, as witnessed by the recent extension of tours of duty of military personnel have demonstrated in opposition to the war.

Moreover, the combination of the criminal bombing in Madrid, evidently perpetrated by Islamic reactionaries, and the more than justified uprising against the American colonial presence in Iraq have reverberated through those countries that constitute the "Coalition of the Willing." The Ukrainian troops in Kut abandoned the city. With the exception of the British component, the forces sent by other U.S. allies are militarily insignificant (and, thus, extremely vulnerable to attack). Several of the countries involved have lent their support to American imperialism in the face of considerable domestic opposition to the war. The pro-Bush government in Spain was thrown out in the recent elections and Blair in Britain, Berlusconi in Italy and Koizumi in Japan are increasingly challenged over an occupation few see in the interest of their respective countries. The continued unraveling of backing by these countries would certainly fuel increasing disenchantment with the occupation in the U.S. Colin Powell has been given the unhappy assignment of trying to mobilize UN and NATO support for the occupation. But unless the U.S. bends to French, German and Russian aspirations to partake in the spoils, such support will not be forthcoming.



WV Photo

ILWU Local 10 longshore union held stop-work meeting in opposition to occupation of Iraq, joining March 20 rally in San Francisco.

For Workers Rule in the Near East and the U.S.!

Iraq is not Vietnam, where resistance to foreign domination combined with an uprising of workers and peasants succeeded in overthrowing capitalism. Iraq is not a nation, but an artificial state created by the British imperialists, its boundaries drawn up on a piece of paper in the aftermath of World War I. Decades ago in Iraq, the principal force for an anti-sectarian solution, the Communist Party, was devastated through the treachery of Stalinism and butchery of imperialist-backed Ba'athist regimes. Today, the Communist Party sits in the U.S. puppet Governing Council. With the Communist Party effectively destroyed, what was left behind was increasingly discredited Third World nationalism and reactionary Islamic fundamentalism.

The current resistance is mainly organized by Arab Sunni and Shi'ite tribal and religious leaders, elements that have not the least appetite to overturn existing social relations and that, absent the occupation, would seek to dominate each other as well as the Kurdish north. Kurds as a people constitute a nation that extends into Iran, Syria and Turkey as well as Iraq, and whose desire for national self-determination is just. The ICL stands for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan. Many Iraqi Kurds currently look with favor on the American occupation, as a guarantor against Arab reconquest. This sentiment has spread to Kurds in Syria, who demanded citizenship rights in a recent protest where many demonstrators chanted pro-American slogans. The Syrian regime responded with lethal force, killing at least eleven Kurds.

In Iraq today, the right of Kurdish self-determination cannot be addressed as long as it is subordinated to the U.S. occupation. The struggle for Kurdish independence can only go forward through intransigent opposition to the occupation. This necessarily means confrontation with the Kurdish nationalists of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdistan Democratic Party, who collaborate with U.S. imperialism. History has never been kind to the Kurds when their leaders sell out to imperialism. The U.S. is opposed to even a semblance of self-determination

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International Communist League in Worldwide Protests

On March 20, millions rallied worldwide to oppose the bloody and brutal U.S. occupation of Iraq. Sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) intervened in these demonstrations to win workers and youth to the program of international working-class socialist revolution.

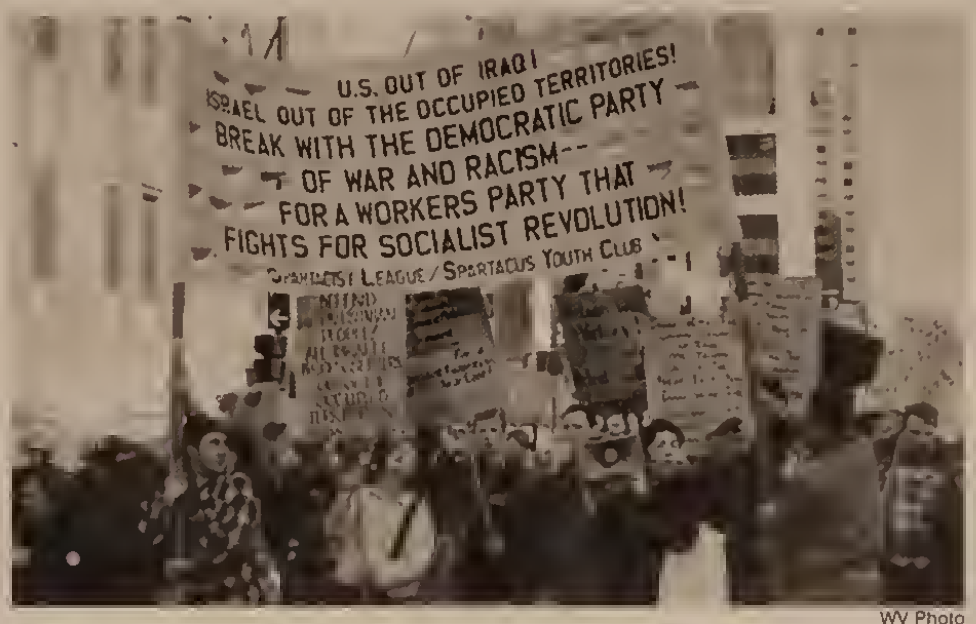
The Spartacist League/U.S. and Spartacus Youth Clubs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco marched under the banner: "U.S. Out of Iraq! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism—For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!" In Toronto, Trotskyist League of Canada banners proclaimed: "U.S. Out of Iraq! Canada Out of Afghanistan! For Class Struggle Against Canadian Capitalism! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!" and "National Chauvinism Is Poison to Class Struggle—Independence for Quebec!" The ICL intervened as well in Tokyo, Paris, Rome, London, Dublin, Athens, Sydney, Melbourne, Vancouver and Johannesburg.

The Spartacist Group Japan distributed a leaflet opposing the occupation and declaring: "Japanese imperialist military out of Iraq and Near East, now! Hands off North Korea—Down with the starvation sanctions." The Tokyo rally, organized by the Social Democratic Party's "World Peace Now" coalition, focused on pacifist opposition to the *U.S./British* occupation and called for the UN imperialist den of thieves to intervene. The Japanese Spartacists' placard defending the right of the North Korean deformed workers state to possess nuclear weapons created the most controversy. The U.S./UN disarmament and devastation of Iraq has made very clear that nuclear weapons are vital for North Korea's defense against imperialist attack. Several people told our comrades that when they first saw the placard last year they hated it, but now they are wondering if we have a point.

In London's Trafalgar Square, Labour "left" Jeremy Corbyn said that Labour prime minister Tony Blair's right-wing domestic agenda was dictated by the U.S., underlining the dominant theme of English nationalism. The surprise electoral victory of the Spanish PSOE (Socialist Workers Party) in the wake of the Madrid bombings has whetted the appetite of other European social-democratic parties to exploit antiwar sentiment for their parliamentary ambitions. The French Communist Party shamefully promoted the capitalists' "war on terror" by insisting that the lead banner be changed to read, "No to War, No to Terrorist Attacks." Europe's capitalist rulers have seized on the heinous Madrid bombings to promote their own terror against the workers, immigrants and national minorities. The French CP was part of the previous government which launched "Vigipirate" police-state repression against immigrants and especially youth of North African descent.

In Paris, the Ligue Trotskyste de France energetically opposed the fascist anti-immigrant government exclusion of girls wearing the *hijab* (headscarf) in public schools and raised demands for full citizenship rights for immigrants, defense of the Palestinian people and French troops out of Haiti, the Ivory Coast and Kosovo. Our comrades distributed a leaflet explaining their critical support to the Rouen candidate of Gauche Révolutionnaire (Taaffeites) because "GR has the correct line of opposing the racist exclusions" and exposed the larger "far left" groups, Lutte Ouvrière and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) for being "the spearhead of the campaign for the racist exclusion of young women who wear the headscarf." Although the LCR opposed the government ban, LCR professors voted to expel the young women from the Paris-area school which sparked the national controversy.

In the U.S., the main organizers—from Workers World Party's ANSWER coalition to United for Peace and Justice and the Revolutionary Communist Party-hacked Not In Our Name (NION)—corralled antiwar protest into the "anybody but Bush" pro-Democratic Party campaign. With Kerry calling for a larger U.S. military, who better to prettify the historic party of racism and war than so-called "peace" candidate Dennis Kucinich, whose supporters were all over the New York demo and who was a featured, and heavily applauded, speaker. In Chicago, black Democratic Party front man Jesse Jackson spoke twice, repeating his mantra "remember in November" (i.e., vote Democrat) and scandalously said the money going to Iraq should be going to the police—the thugs in charge of enforcing racist capitalist rule, not least in Chicago's ghettos. Our Chicago contingent's opposition to the Democrats sparked a lot of interest (and some hecklers), and we put the International Socialist Organization (ISO) on the spot. On paper, the ISO opposes the Democrats as a capitalist party, yet in 2000 they voted for the bourgeois Green candidate Ralph Nader. Currently the ISO is divided over whether to support Nader, which doubtless reflects their unease with distancing themselves from the "stop Bush at all costs" liberals they cater to.



WV Photo

Chicago SL/SYC contingent at March 20 anti-occupation rally.

The heavily black longshore union ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area held its monthly stop-work meeting to coincide with the demonstration as an act of solidarity. They stopped work for the shift and carried a banner in the march declaring: "Down With the Patriot Act! Uphold the Bill of Rights! Defend Immigrant Workers Rights/Bush's 'War on Terror'=War on Workers." At the same time, the union's officials are mobilizing to get out the vote for the Democrats, chaining the union to the class enemy. *WV* salesmen argued about this with longshoremen outside the stop-work meeting and at the rally.

The RCP/NION claims to oppose the "electoral black hole," yet as the Spartacus Youth Club pointed out in a polemical leaflet directed to the RCP at March 20 protests, they call for "more than a million people in the streets of NYC at the time of the Republican National Convention to say NO to the whole Bush agenda!" (See "Revolutionary Communist Party: Revolutionary in Name Only," *WV* No. 823, 2 April.)

In San Francisco, a breakaway march of some 1,000 was quickly surrounded by cops in full riot gear who brutally beat demonstrators trying to escape and arrested 87. The Partisan Defense Committee sent a letter to the San Francisco District Attorney demanding all charges be dropped. In Los Angeles the notorious LAPD targeted the anarchist contingent, arresting and beating protesters. The SL/SYC contingent marching behind them chanted: "No repression of antiwar protesters, leave the anarchists alone!" Earlier, the anarchist "anti-capitalist" contingent chanted with us for the UN to stay out of Iraq but did not like our chants calling for a workers party. However, to end war, we have to end the capitalist system which breeds it, and this requires forging the revolutionary workers party capable of leading the proletariat to its own class rule, a workers state. As New York's SL/SYC contingent chanted, "1,2,3,4 capitalism means racism and war! 5,6,7,8 forward to a workers state!" Join us!■

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for the Kurdish people. The imperialist carve-up of Kurdistan has served not only to dismember the Kurdish nation but to weaken those neocolonial states that got a share of the booty. And Washington intends to keep it that way.

The American colonial presence has and will continue to exacerbate and inflame the grievances among differing peoples and tribes and can lead only to internecine conflicts and bloodshed. Kurdish self-determination can only be effected through the agency of a working-class revolution, led by internationalist, Trotskyist, proletarian parties, that overturns all four of these capitalist regimes, unfurling the banner of liberation and freedom from nationalist oppression for the myriad peoples that make up the Near East. This, and our fight for emancipation of all the peoples of the region, is an application of the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution which illustrates that in countries of belated capitalist development, genuine national liberation and other basic democratic rights can be achieved only through the victorious proletarian socialist revolution.

When the U.S. first captured Baghdad, the American media reveled in running film clips of impoverished Shi'ites in the ghetto of Saddam City welcoming Americans, reflecting illusions that U.S. troops would undo the repression the majority Shi'ites had suffered under Hussein's rule. Saddam City was renamed Sadr City and soon became a center of opposition to the American occupation. But under clerical domination the Shi'ites can only reverse the terms of oppression they experienced under Sunni domination. There will be no reconciliation of the ethnic, religious and national antagonisms short of proletarian socialist rule.

Shi'ite forces recently kidnapped and threatened to execute three Japanese civilians, one of whom is a young antiwar student researching the effects of depleted uranium on the population of Iraq. This hostage-taking in the supposed service of securing the departure of Japan's 500-plus troops from Iraq testifies to the desperation of the reactionary Islamist leadership. It also mimics the mindset of the American imperialist rulers who collectively punish the peoples of Iraq. The razing to the ground of the gypsy village of Kawlia by Moktada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army, supposedly undertaken because of that hamlet's notoriety as a haven for dancing and "loose" women, not only provides further testimony to such hostility to "outsiders" but stands as a warning to Iraqi women as to their fate under Shi'ite clerical rule.

Thus, while we of the International Communist League defend each and every blow against the imperialist occupiers of Iraq, we give no political support to reactionary clerical forces and warn against illusions that the victory of one or another of these elements could result in anything but further bloodshed and repression. Indeed, victorious proletarian revolution throughout the Near East requires a struggle to defeat religious fundamentalism of all stripes as well as the overthrow of the monarchs, generals, Zionist butchers, and other capitalist rulers. Marxists seek to mobilize the oppressed masses behind the power of the ***proletariat*** in struggle against colonial occupations, using workers mobilizations (strikes, hot-cargoing of military goods and troop transports) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against both the imperialist occupying forces and the domestic bourgeoisie. We are politically hostile to any other strategy as alien to our proletarian purpose.

American imperialism's drive for world domination is not the product of bad policies but of the inevitable thrust of the U.S. capitalist rulers to seek new sources for current and future profit. Their parties, the Democrats and Republicans, are united in this quest as they are in supporting America's capitalist rulers' "right" to further fatten their purses at whatever cost to working people here. To be sure, the Democrats are more prone to offer their sympathies as well as false promises to the unfortunate; but the erosion of incomes, of pensions, of health care and of employment has continued for the past several decades irrespective of which party was in power.

It is the working class that has the social cohesion and power to lead all the exploited and oppressed against the depredations of the capitalist rulers. But the union misleadership would rather surrender ground than launch a fight that might threaten the rule of capital to which they are committed. And this commitment is maintained primarily through the agency of the Democratic Party. Next to Bush, it doesn't take much to look like a "lesser evil." But support for the equally capitalist Democratic Party "lesser evil" is precisely what ***prevents*** workers from organizing to do what they need to in order to defend themselves and all the oppressed: mobilize their own strength independently of the capitalists. To that end the proletariat needs to forge its own party—an internationalist proletarian party that fights each and every one of the efforts of America's imperialist rulers to expand their domination, a fight that, for its victory, requires a socialist revolution. The Spartacist League devotes all its efforts to educating the working class in the necessity of the above tasks and struggling to forge the revolutionary party capable of leading socialist revolution.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Racism and Anti-Woman Bigotry

For Free Abortion on Demand!

We print below a forum given by comrade Karen Cole at Columbia University on March 9, slightly edited for publication.

The right to an abortion is no more than a democratic right to a simple and safe medical procedure. We say it should be free on demand as part of free, quality health care. Providing women with the means for deciding when and if they want to have children is basic to the fight for women's equality. Why is such an issue so explosive in the U.S. today? Allowing women sexual freedom, just like legitimizing homosexual relations and allowing independence to youth in their sexual relations, is a threat to the institution of the family, a bastion of social reaction which, along with organized religion, reinforces authority and conservatism and props up the capitalist system. Any question relating to sex—particularly sex and race—instantly inflames social reaction.

You have to step back and have a historical materialist view to understand how we got here. Otherwise, you are not politically armed to fight against the pseudo-intellectual babble you hear every day in the classroom and from the capitalist media that the cruelties and injustices of society are "inevitable," that you are inherently at fault for being poor, that competition and war are a given. When you touch the issue of the special oppression of women, you get heavy doses of religious claptrap with words like "morality" and "tradition," "natural instincts," and, of course, "family values." Historical materialism must be studied. Friedrich Engels explained the concept succinctly:

> "Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case."
>
> —"Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx" (17 March 1883)

Today, marriage, the family and the social roles defined therein of men, women and children are not ***preordained*** but must be studied in their ***manmade*** historical context. Everything about marriage in capitalist class society has to do with "state institutions" and "legal conceptions"—access to health insurance, inheritance, visitation rights, custody rights, Social Security, immigration rights and property ownership rights in general. We live in the epoch of imperialist decay where in America, alongside unprecedented wealth for a few, there is mass unemployment, exploding prison populations, deteriorating health care, evaporating pensions and Social Security and the slashing of social welfare services. Therefore, we welcome any gains that can be won from this cruelly bigoted system.

Almost every day in the news, another front is opened to challenge women's basic rights. When in October the House passed the ban on a seldom-used abortion procedure, grotesquely dubbed "partial-birth abortion" by the anti-abortion bigots, there was a dearth of organized demonstrations by the "pro-choice" feminists and liberals. Predictably, the "pro-choice" liberals launched a court suit, playing into the right-wing's logic by basing the suit solely on the fact that there is no exception made for saving the life of the mother, which was Clinton's position.

John Ashcroft's Justice Department took the cue and has ominously subpoenaed hundreds of private medical records of legal abortions from hospitals and Planned Parenthood clinics. Not only do they want records of any second-trimester abortion that may have had medical complications, but they want the names of doctors who have performed *any* type of abortions in order to further the goal of banning *all* abortions—as part of an unremitting campaign to roll back the hard-fought gains of labor, women and black people that sprang not only from the civil rights movement, but go back to the union struggles of the 1930s.

Doctors and nurses who have bravely provided abortion services face murderous attacks from the woman-hating bigots all over the country. In Wichita, Kansas, Dr. George Tiller has been providing abortions for 31 years. Tiller is one of just ***four or five*** physicians in the ***entire*** U.S. to offer late-term abortions of "viable" fetuses (however brief and malformed their lives might be) if it will save the life or protect the health of the mother. Such late-term abortions are still legal on the books in most states, but even where it is legal, doctors often won't perform them. Women fly in from all over to see Tiller. In 1986, a pipe bomb exploded at his clinic. In 1993, Tiller was shot through both arms. His life and the lives of his clinic staff have now been chosen as priority targets by the "right to life" bigots of Operation Rescue, and his clinic is ringed by right-wing fanatics who go through the trash to find personal information about his staff so they can stalk, picket and threaten them. While Clinton was president, seven abortion providers and staff members were assassinated.

Stop Bipartisan Attack on Women's Rights!

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at March 20 demonstration, San Francisco.

The Working Class Must Lead the Fight for Women's Rights

Not only are abortion rights besieged, but also the remnants of affirmative action, desegregation of schools and access to welfare. The imperialists' "war on terror," which has meant the slaughter of thousands of Iraqis, has also been a war on immigrants, blacks, labor and ***anybody*** standing up against the status quo. Rod Paige, the Secretary of Education, just called the National Education Association teachers union a "terrorist organization" for not going along with the Bush administration's assault on public education.

This so-called "war on terror" that is wielded to roll back civil liberties has also targeted women. For example, recently there has been a hue and cry raised over "international sex-trafficking." The anti-immigrant USA-Patriot Act now sets new penalties for those convicted of "trafficking," augmenting anti-immigrant legislation and expanding punitive measures set by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. These laws increase the already massive immigration-control police apparatus in order to go after anybody deemed deviant. The prostitutes rounded up must arduously prove they are really "victims"—otherwise, they face jail and deportation—and must fink on others to attain asylum.

We're for decriminalizing prostitution because we're against all "crimes without victims," like laws against every other

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McCracken/Pensacola News-Journal

Left: Charred remains of Pensacola, Florida clinic bombed in 1984 by deadly "right to lifers." Right: Amherst, New York clinic of Dr. Barnett Slepian, murdered for his courageous commitment to women's right to abortion.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 825

30 April 2004

9/11 Commission: Democrats Seek to Out-Bush Bush

Lies, Repression and Imperialist War

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

APRIL 25—Morning newspaper accounts of the September 11 Commission hearings revive the horror of the day thousands of innocent people lost their lives in the attacks on the World Trade Center, while nightly news broadcasts show the exploitation of that tragedy for more terror and destruction by U.S. imperialism in Iraq and repression at home. As we go to press, the U.S. military is moving in on Najaf and threatening to flatten Falluja. We have made clear from the beginning of the Iraq war that every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world. We take a side against the U.S. imperialist occupation without giving an ounce of political support to the reactionary clerics who appear to be leading much of the resistance. We fight for a perspective of militant class struggle on the home front against the imperialist rulers who oppress workers here and abroad.

The Bush administration has been dragged kicking and screaming to the September 11 Commission by families who are grief-stricken and demanding answers about why their loved ones died.

AP

AFP

National Security Council meeting September 12, 2001. Right: March 2003 U.S. bombing of Baghdad. Bush cabal manipulated September 11 attack to justify war against Iraq.

But this commission has little to do with "revealing the truth" and everything to do with misdirecting anger with the U.S. ruling class into enhancing the repressive powers of the capitalist state. These hearings also reflect frictions within the U.S. ruling class, which are heightened now that the U.S. war in Iraq has become troublesome. The real purpose of the commission is to resolve differences within the ruling class in order to better manage domestic and foreign exploitation. How fitting that Democrat Bob Kerrey, a Navy SEAL, Vietnam veteran and certifiable war criminal responsible for the assassination of (at least) 21 Vietnamese civilians, takes center stage at the commission to thunder about "truth" and "justice." The Democrats seek to exploit the hearings for their advantage in the upcoming presidential elections, but what the real story of September 11 and the Iraq war reveals is that the Democrats and Republicans are *partner parties of capitalist rule.*

Some secrets have come out, like the 6 August 2001 "Presidential Briefing Memo" titled "Bin Laden Determined to Attack Inside the United States." Condoleezza Rice claims this was "no silver bullet." Right, they knew merely that Osama bin Laden was planning an attack

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Mordechai Vanunu Released After 18 Years in Prison

Walled In by Zionist State

APRIL 24—On April 21, Mordechai Vanunu finally walked out of the Ashkelon prison hell which has been his home for nearly two decades. But a free man he is not. Instead, he is to be given the treatment well known to political dissidents released from torture chambers in Syria, Libya and countless dictatorships propped up by U.S. imperialism, such as Saudi Arabia. Who he talks to, where he stays, whether he can travel is totally at the whim of the Zionist butchers, and the threat of renewed imprisonment—or worse—hangs over his head. The unending Zionist vendetta against Vanunu is retribution for his service to humanity in exposing the extent of Israel's nuclear arsenal.

Immediately upon his release from prison, Vanunu defied Israel's rulers and held an impromptu press conference in English before 200 supporters and the international media. Long a defender of Palestininan rights, Vanunu reiterated his opposition to Israel's policies and the Zionist doomsday machine. Meanwhile, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon escalated measures to decapitate and dismember the Palestinian people. In an April 23 television interview, Sharon admitted he personally told George Bush on his recent visit to Washington that Israel is no longer bound by its pledge not to harm Yasir Arafat. This is no idle threat.

For over two years, Arafat has been a virtual prisoner in his Ramallah compound, which Israeli tanks and missiles have reduced to little more than rubble. On March 22, Israel fired missiles from helicopters and blew away Hamas' "spiritual leader" Ahmed Yassin, a partially blind 67-year-old quadriplegic in a

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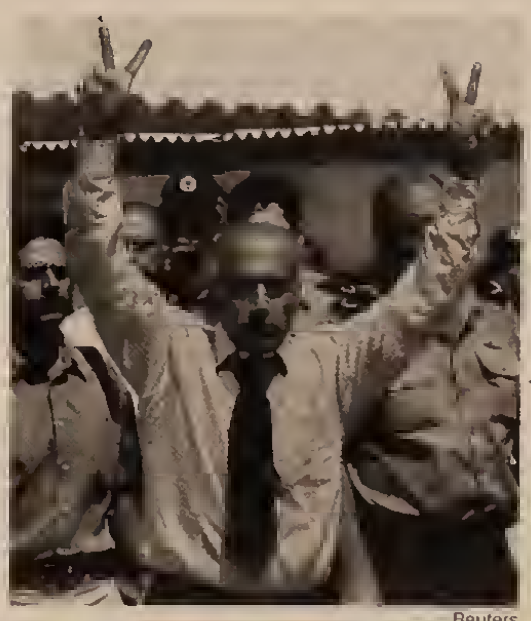

Reuters

Defiant Mordechai Vanunu leaves prison, April 21.

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Honor Lucy Parsons!

CHICAGO—In March, when the Chicago Park District announced plans to name a small park on the city's Northwest Side after the labor agitator and anti-racist fighter, Lucy Parsons, howls of protest were heard from the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.). Raising the same timeworn slanders that were used to frame up and hang her husband, Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons, in 1887, F.O.P. head Mark Donahue said: "The woman was an anarchist. She promoted the overthrow of the government and the use of dynamite in getting their way, [including] a dynamite bomb thrown into the midst of police officers at the scene" of the demonstration at Haymarket (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 24 March).

Chicago mayor Richard Daley, embarrassed that only 27 of the city's 555 parks are named after women, has defended the choice of the name. While not objecting to the cops' slanders directed at Albert Parsons, Daley said, "Please don't blame the wife because of her husband's actions. That's sexist." Parsons probably would not consider it much of an honor to be recognized by the cabal that runs City Hall today, but we welcome the naming of a park after a partisan of the working class!

Lucy Parsons, of mixed racial heritage, was probably born a slave in Texas. She and Albert Parsons left Texas in 1873 after her husband, a former Confederate soldier, was shot and threatened with lynching for helping to register blacks to vote. On 1 May 1886, a massive nationwide strike for the eight-hour day began. Albert and Lucy Parsons helped organize a march of 80,000 in Chicago. On May 3, at least four striking workers were killed by the cops in an unprovoked massacre at the McCormick Harvester plant. The next evening at Haymarket Square, an unknown provocateur threw a bomb into a workers rally protesting the murders, setting off another cop riot. Seven cops died. The bosses and capitalist press screamed for workers' blood: police smashed union offices, wrecked presses of foreign-language newspapers and filled the jails with foreign-born workers.

Albert Parsons was one of eight anarchists and militant labor organizers framed up for murder and conspiracy. Hanging-judge Gary and his hand-selected jury of admittedly biased plant foremen and superintendents sent Parsons and three other Haymarket martyrs, George Engel, August Spies and Adolph Fischer, to the gallows. Another militant, Louis Lingg, was killed or committed suicide in his cell. The prosecutor told the jury that these defendants were selected "because they were leaders...no more guilty than the thousands who follow them...convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society." Every year, workers around the world pay tribute to the Haymarket martyrs by celebrating May Day.

Before his execution, Albert wrote to his wife: "You, I bequeath to the people, a woman of the people. I have one request to make of you: Commit no rash act when I am gone, but take up the cause of Socialism where I am compelled to lay it down." Lucy Parsons did exactly that, spending the next 55 years of her life agitating for black rights, women's rights, immigrant rights, and fighting to mobilize the power of labor. She was active in the fight against the lynching of blacks in the South, and spoke at the founding convention of the revolutionary syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1905. A particular focus of her work was always defense of class-war prisoners, and she worked with the Communist Party-supported International Labor Defense (ILD) on the cases of Tom Mooney, Angelo Herndon, Sacco and Vanzetti and the Scottsboro Boys. She joined the by then Stalinized CP in 1939, toward the end of her life.

Lucy Parsons Project

Labor agitator Lucy Parsons

The Chicago bosses have a long and bloody history of violence against working people, minorities and political opponents, from the Haymarket martyrs to the Memorial Day massacre of ten steel workers in 1937 to the shoot-to-kill orders during the ghetto uprising of 1968 to the killings of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark by the Chicago cops in 1969. Today, the capitalists and their cops ("minions of the oppressing class," as Parsons characterized them) would like to smear all opponents of the racist status quo as terrorists and "bomb throwers." Antiwar and "anti-globalization" protesters, particularly anarchists, have been targeted by the recently reconstituted Red Squad.

Haymarket is very much a living memory in Chicago, where trade unionists and leftists pay annual tribute to the martyrs at their monument in Forest Home Cemetery. But the memory also still burns for the Chicago police, who have a memorial to the cops killed at Haymarket at their police academy, where it had to be moved after angry workers and militants repeatedly tried to destroy it in Haymarket Square. The workers of Chicago and the world will show Lucy Parsons and the Haymarket martyrs the greatest honor when they, building on the groundwork laid by her and all of the other great working-class leaders, take the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters in the course of the international socialist revolution!■

TROTSKY

LENIN

The Workers State in a World Capitalist Economy

The pro-market economic policies of China's ruling Stalinist bureaucracy—including maintaining Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave and abandoning the strict state monopoly of foreign trade—are undermining defense of the deformed workers state created through the 1949 Revolution. In 1927, the United Opposition of Trotsky and Zinoviev opposed the nationalist economic policies carried out by the Soviet bureaucracy under Stalin and Bukharin, which included major economic and political concessions to the rich peasants and other pro-capitalist forces. The Opposition warned against the anti-Marxist idea that the USSR could achieve socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—in a single country. While laying out a series of economic measures to strengthen the proletarian dictatorship, it emphasized above all the need to return to the perspective of proletarian internationalism that animated the 1917 October Revolution.

In the long struggle between two irreconcilably hostile social systems—capitalism and socialism—the outcome will be determined *in the last analysis* by the relative productivity of labor under each system. And this, under market conditions, is measured by the relation between domestic prices and world prices. It was this fundamental fact that Lenin had in mind when in one of his last speeches he warned the party of the "test" that would be imposed "by the Russian and international market, to which we are subordinated, with which we are connected, and from which we cannot isolate ourselves." For that reason, Bukharin's notion that we proceed toward socialism at any pace, even a "snail's pace," is a banal and vapid petty-bourgeois fantasy.

We cannot escape from capitalist encirclement by retreating into a nationally exclusive economy. Just because of its exclusiveness, such an economy would be compelled to advance at an extremely slow pace, and in consequence would encounter not weaker, but stronger pressure, not only from the capitalist armies and navies ("intervention"), but above all from cheap capitalist commodities.

The monopoly of foreign trade is a vitally necessary instrument for socialist construction, under the circumstances of a higher technological level in the capitalist countries. But the socialist economy now under construction can be defended by this monopoly only if it continually comes closer to the prevailing levels of technology, production costs, quality, and price in the world economy....

No domestic policy can by itself deliver us from the economic, political, and military dangers of the capitalist encirclement. The task at home is to move forward as far as possible on the road of socialist construction by strengthening ourselves with a proper class policy, by proper relations between the working class and the peasantry. The internal resources of the Soviet Union are enormous and make this entirely possible. While we make use of the world capitalist market for this purpose, our fundamental historical expectations continue to be linked with the further development of the world proletarian revolution. Its victory in the advanced countries will break the ring of capitalist encirclement, deliver us from our heavy military burden, enormously strengthen us technologically, accelerate our entire development—in town and countryside, in factory and school—and give us the possibility of really building socialism—that is, a classless society, based on the highest level of technology and real equality among all its members both at work and in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labor.

—"The Platform of the Opposition: The Party Crisis and How to Overcome It" (September 1927), reprinted in *The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1926-27)* (1980)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce André, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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No. 825 **30 April 2004**

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No. 32, Spring 2004

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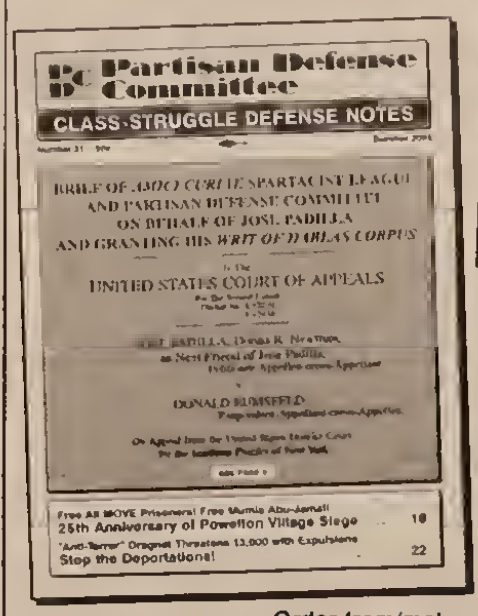

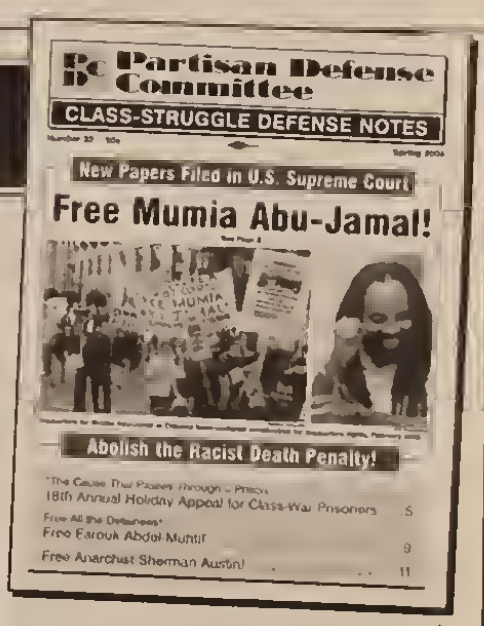

No. 31, Summer 2003

50¢ (24 pages)

Marxists defend citizenship rights! *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 31 reprints in its entirety the *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals by the PDC and the Spartacist League in defense of Jose Padilla.

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CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Palestinian Militant Farouk Abdel-Muhti Freed!

Estrin/NY Times

When the plane bearing political prisoner Farouk Abdel-Muhti touched down at New York's La Guardia airport on April 12, a long nightmare of torturous detention had come to an end. In a victory for workers, immigrants and all the oppressed, a federal judge felt compelled to order the Palestinian leftist's release from a penitentiary in Atlanta, where he had been spirited away by Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE, formerly the INS) officials just days before.

Abdel-Muhti spent 718 days in the clutches of the Feds after being seized by a joint task force of INS agents and NYC cops on April 26, 2002. The pretext was a Clinton-era 1995 deportation order—an order that had never been enforced primarily because, as a stateless Palestinian, there was no territory to deport him to and no government to accept him. Abdel-Muhti was in fact arrested for his long-standing struggle for national rights for the Palestinian people. As an activist for the Palestine Aid Society, he spoke at the Partisan Defense Committee-initiated labor/black mobilization that rode the Ku Klux Klan out of New York City on 23 October 1999. In the weeks before his abduction, he arranged radio interviews with Palestinian spokesmen as the Israeli army invaded the West Bank and perpetrated the notorious Jenin massacre. Like other Palestinian activists, Abdel-Muhti was targeted in the bipartisan "war on terror," which has produced a severe diminution of the rights of all workers and the oppressed, especially immigrants.

Calling him a "terrorist," FBI agents tried to coerce Abdel-Muhti into informing on supporters of Palestinian organizations. After his refusal, he was knocked to the floor and methodically beaten by agents. Abdel-Muhti said later, "They told me, 'If you don't cooperate, we're going to send you to Israel, to the Mossad'." Indeed, the deportation of this prominent Palestinian activist to Israel would likely mean torture or worse at the hands of the Zionist authorities.

During the nearly two years of his detention, Abdel-Muhti was viciously beaten twice and had leftist literature (including the PDC's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*) seized by prison guards. He was shunted to more than half a dozen prisons, including an eight-month stay in solitary confinement in York, Pennsylvania, far from his family, supporters and legal counsel in New York City. Throughout this ordeal, Farouk remained steadfast, fighting for his rights and those of all the detainees. Last year, he participated in a hunger strike to call attention to the onerous conditions he and others faced in the Passaic County Jail in New Jersey. He recently sent a statement of support to the March 20 actions against the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Farouk had challenged his detention in a federal *habeas corpus* petition that stipulated that his ongoing incarceration was illegal. Indeed, Abdel-Muhti's continued imprisonment was a clear violation of the bourgeoisie's already repressive legal standards. In the 2001 case *Zadvydas v. Davis*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that immigrants facing imminent deportation could only be detained for a maximum of six months. This is a standard more honored in the breach than in the observance by America's racist rulers, as shown by the untold hundreds of immigrants detained for years on the flimsiest of charges or even without charges.

On March 30, after a delay of over 16 months, Abdel-Muhti was finally allowed a hearing on his petition for release. But, in a pattern established throughout his detention, the government filed new material just 37 minutes before the hearing was to begin. This time the legal maneuver was quite sinister. The Feds filed a declaration from the Acting Chief for Removals Support and Coordination, Lisa Hoechst, concerning a new procedure the U.S. and Israeli governments negotiated in March for Palestinians to be repatriated through Israel. In the words of BICE minion Hoechst, "This new procedure alters the previously problematic process in which Palestinians could not be removed in the absence of an original Israeli or Palestinian travel document."

Already, at least three planeloads of stateless Palestinians have been sent to the West Bank and Gaza via Jordan and Egypt. This policy, no doubt carried out with the full knowledge of Israeli intelligence, was first announced in papers filed in Abdel-Muhti's case in December 2002. The new U.S.-Israel agreement, if implemented, would be a further escalation in the U.S. authorities' drive to deport Palestinians.

Farouk's supporters and even the Associated Press have used the term "emblematic" to describe his fate. Abdel-Muhti does indeed symbolize countless victims of BICE terror against immigrants all over the country. As a political prisoner, he put a defiant face on the detainees facing wholesale violations of civil liberties, not to mention norms of human decency. Only days after Abdel-Muhti's abduction, the PDC wrote: "The arrest and virtual kidnapping of this well-known and respected political activist in New York City will not go unopposed!" We said the workers movement and all defenders of democratic rights had to take up the cause of his freedom. Just weeks before his hearing, Abdel-Muhti had agreed to become a recipient of the PDC's class-war prisoner stipend program. We are happy to report that he was not long in our program.

After an ordeal that even a federal judge called "Kafkaesque," Abdel-Muhti is still without official "status" as an immigrant. Yet he remains unbowed. "We won a victory," he said, "but still we have to win the war for justice, equality and rights, for both immigrants and all the people in the nation who are fighting for democratic rights and social justice." Ultimately, that struggle requires the forging of an intransigent workers party to lead the proletariat in sweeping away the capitalist system. *No deportations! Free all the detainees!* ■

Australia: A Victory for Workers and Aboriginal People

Trades Hall Ban Beaten Back

We reprint below an abridged and edited version of a statement issued by the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League, on April 15.

In a small but important victory for all those fighting against the intense racist oppression of the Aboriginal peoples, and for the entire left, the Police Association was recently defeated in its manoeuvres against a Spartacist League 31 March public meeting in Melbourne opposing racist cop terror. We successfully held our forum, "Defend Redfern Aborigines —Mobilise Union Power!", at Trades Hall after the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), which had reportedly been acting at the behest of the VTHC-affiliated Police Association, retreated from attempts to have our room bookings cancelled.

Earlier we were told that the Police Association's diktat was in response to our position on recent events in Redfern where we called for solidarity with militant Aboriginal youth against racist state terror. We were also told that it was Laborite VTHC Secretary, Leigh Hubbard, brandishing a letter from the Police Association, who had originally demanded our room bookings be cancelled. However, angered unionists and leftists pressured Trades Hall to reverse its ban. The rebuff of the Police Association's anti-communist manoeuvres is a blow against the increasing intrusion of the bosses' state into the workers movement.

Our forum addressed the 15 February events in Redfern, when the seething anger of the Aboriginal community at racist state terror erupted after police chased popular 17-year-old Kamilaroi Murri youth Thomas "TJ" Hickey to his death. Following a series of provocations by the NSW [New South Wales] Carr Labor government's cops, Aboriginal youth organised to effectively defend themselves and courageously fought back against phalanxes of police "stormtroops" in a nine-hour pitched battle.

An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!

Upon hearing of the outrageous attempt to silence our defence of the Aboriginal population in Redfern, we immediately alerted the left and workers movement and called for protest letters to be sent to the VTHC. A 20 March SL statement argued:

> "As part of the armed fist of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the rule of the capitalist exploiters, the police are the deadly class enemies of the workers movement and oppressed minorities.... For the leader of the peak union body in Victoria to bow to the diktats of this police body against an organisation in the workers movement is a gross travesty."

We noted that the "interests of Aborigines, immigrant minorities and those of the working people will go forward together or fall back separately."

Australasian Spartacist

Sydney, 24 February: Spartacus Youth Club supporters join Redfern march in memory of Aboriginal youth, Thomas Hickey, killed while fleeing cops.

In response to our statement and discussions with unionists and leftists, opposition to the pro-cop censorship increasingly bore down on Hubbard and Trades Hall. Reportedly at a meeting of union officials, Hubbard conceded, saying that a space would be made available for the SL forum. On the day of our forum, the left social-democratic Socialist Alliance group came out with a letter which urged "the VTHC executive to reverse this ban, and guarantee that freedom of speech that the democratic workers' movement values so highly."

All those who acted to overturn the ban on the 31 March forum should be congratulated. We call on those who participated in defeating this attempt to silence opponents of racist repression, and indeed all those who oppose the brutal oppression of the Aboriginal people, to take up the defence of the more than two dozen heroic militants who have been arrested over the 15 February upheaval. Class-conscious workers, leftists, Aboriginal activists and Asian and Arab youth, who are also under siege from the cops, must mobilise in united-front

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Expropriate the Hong Kong Capitalists!

Chris Patten's Cuckoo's Egg Hatches

South China Morning Post

Economist

In a blow against Hong Kong's imperialist-backed "democracy" movement, the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) declared on April 6 that any move toward "free elections" in that city would first have to meet with Beijing's approval. In response, some 20,000 marched in Hong Kong on April 11, the most recent in a series of protests against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime and its local executive.

Last December, the U.S. Consul General in Hong Kong, James Keith, issued a call for "universal suffrage" and for a debate on "constitutional change" in a clear attempt to weaken Beijing's hold over the city just seven years after its rightful return to China following 150-plus years of British colonial rule. For maximum impact, Keith issued this demand as talks were being held in Washington between Chinese premier Wen Jiabao and George W. Bush. On January 1, some 100,000 marched in a demonstration led chiefly by Hong Kong's anti-Communist, pro-Western Democratic Party under the banner of—you guessed it—"universal suffrage" and the right to choose their own chief executive (currently appointed by Beijing). On March 4, the founding chairman of the Democratic Party, Martin Lee, arrived in Washington for briefings with the U.S. Senate and Secretary of State Colin Powell. No curtains necessary for the American imperialist puppet-masters.

Ever since the 1949 Chinese Revolution, the U.S. has had one and only one aim toward the People's Republic—to reverse the expropriation of the imperialists and their Chinese comprador-bourgeois and landlord lackeys. That expropriation is now jeopardized by the policies of the bureaucratic caste that has ruled over the Chinese deformed workers state since Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan with his Guomindang army remnants. In pursuit of capitalist restoration on the Chinese mainland, the U.S. imperialists have maintained Taiwan as a well-armed camp, recently giving billions to the regime there as part of building a "theater missile defense" directed against China. During the 1950-53 Korean War, the U.S. hoped to cross the Yalu River into China, an aspiration happily quashed by the intervention of up to two million Chinese troops. In Hong Kong today, the U.S. seeks to reinforce the position of the city's wealthy financiers and other businessmen and to encourage a counterrevolutionary "democracy" movement spreading to the mainland.

The International Communist League stands opposed to this campaign, however gussied up in the trappings of "universal suffrage" and "free elections," as an elementary defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist-sponsored capitalist counterrevolution. A glimpse of what awaits China's toiling masses if the 1949 Revolution were to be overturned can be seen today in East Europe and the ex-Soviet Union, where most find their very ability to survive in question and where such "democracy" as exists is solely for the newly minted capitalist class, which is rather sleazy even by robber baron standards. The turnover of Hong Kong to China took place under the rubric of Deng Xiaoping's "one country, two systems" formula, which guaranteed bourgeois property rights in Hong Kong. Leading up to the handover, Britain's final colonial governor, Chris Patten, added a few "democratic" trappings to the draconian British regime and actively promoted the formation of the Democratic Party, while Beijing agreed to uphold autonomy for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) for the foreseeable future.

The ICL joined in cheering as the last major colonial holding of the rotted British Empire reverted to China. But we warned that with the venal Stalinist bureaucracy's pledge to maintain Hong Kong's capitalist system, the takeover "is a dagger aimed at the remaining gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution" (*WV* No. 671, 11 July 1997).

Reuters

Months before restoration of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, last British colonial governor Chris Patten joins Chinese official in toast (left). Hong Kong, 1 July 2003: Anti-Communist protest by 500,000 against proposed "security" law. Demonstrators burn communist flag (right).

Indeed, since 1997 Hong Kong's capitalists have increasingly concentrated industrial investment on the mainland, as have investors from Taiwan, taking advantage of cheaper labor costs to operate thousands of sweatshop-grade factories. The main section of Hong Kong's bourgeoisie, primarily represented by the Liberal Party, opted to collaborate with Beijing. As we stated in response to last summer's "democracy" protests (*WV* No. 814, 21 November 2003): "As part of our struggle to defend and extend the gains of the 1949 Revolution, we call for the expropriation of the Hong Kong bourgeoisie, including their holdings on the Chinese mainland. But to carry out this task poses the need to sweep away the Beijing bureaucracy, which by its policies is undermining the defense of the Chinese workers state, through workers political revolution."

Who Will Prevail?

Deng's unhappy foray into theory set only one condition for the hybrid union of capitalist Hong Kong with the PRC: "that patriots form the main body of administrators, that is, of the future government of the Hong Kong special region" ("One Country, Two Systems," 22-23 June 1984). A patriot, according to Deng, "is one who respects the Chinese nation, sincerely supports the motherland's resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong and wishes not to impair Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. Those who meet these requirements are patriots, whether they believe in capitalism or feudalism or even slavery." Louis XVI and Robespierre, Abe Lincoln and Jefferson Davis—happily together at last.

For Deng and his epigones, the peaceful coexistence of counterposed social classes poses no problems. Such illusions were not entertained by Patten and his Anglo-American masters. Last summer the cuekoo's egg Patten laid in the nest of the Chinese deformed workers state began to stir. In response to the CCP-sponsored Article 23 of the Hong Kong Basic Law—legislation that would have allowed Hong Kong's chief executive to more easily suppress putatively seditious groups—Patten's Democratic Party and the Hong Kong branch of the Roman Catholic church led hundreds of thousands in protest.

The ICL opposed Article 23, recognizing that it would be used a hundred times against militant workers, the unemployed and leftists before being used once against counterrevolutionaries. At the same time, it was not difficult for us, given the effusive support by the British and American imperialists for the demonstrations, to recognize these demos as serving the purpose of establishing Hong Kong as a bastion of counterrevolution in China. In the face of the protests, the CCP quietly withdrew Article 23 from consideration, supposedly to be reconsidered at a later date. The Democratic Party went on to make substantial gains in December's district council elections, routing the pro-Beijing allies of the current Hong Kong chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa.

Brown/AFP

2002: Unemployed factory workers protest in city of Liaoyang in northeast China, site of mass labor unrest.

Recently, however, Beijing has questioned the "patriotism" of those involved in the demonstrations. This has unnerved not a few in that city's middle and upper classes who are well aware that, in the final analysis, the state power in Hong Kong is the People's Liberation Army, period. In the unlikely event that the CCP, to shore up its bureaucratic caste dominance, felt obliged to quash the counterrevolutionary political parties in Hong Kong, we would defend such action against the inevitable imperialist hue and cry.

But the Beijing bureaucracy's preservation of Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave within the PRC is in keeping with its 25-year-long policy of opening whole areas of China to investment by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie and by the U.S., Japanese and European imperialists, while maintaining state-controlled production in large-scale industry. Mao's CCP bureaucracy, which spawned today's leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, subscribed to the Stalinist pipe dream that China was "building socialism"—a classless society based on material abundance—with its own unaided efforts. The present CCP leaders believe that they can modernize China, transforming it into the world's next superpower, through ever greater integration into the world capitalist economy.

The proliferation of capitalist market forces, within the framework of the Chinese workers state, bears resemblance to Soviet Russia under the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP, launched in 1921, was a series of concessions to market forces, including letting peasants market some of their produce, encouraging small-scale private industry and allowing a certain leeway for foreign investment. By such measures, the Bolshevik regime of V. I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky sought to restart the economy that had been devastated over the years of World War I and the Civil War that followed the 1917 October Revolution. For Lenin and Trotsky, the NEP was intended as a temporary retreat. Severe restrictions were placed on the hiring and acquisition of land; crucially Lenin emphasized the need to maintain the state monopoly on foreign trade.

In *Whither Russia?* (1925), Trotsky analyzed the contradictions produced by the NEP under the conditions of a world economy dominated by advanced capitalist countries. Trotsky noted that these contradictions "constitute a struggle between two mutually exclusive systems—socialism and capitalism." He pointedly cited Lenin's formulation of the problem at the onset of the NEP: "Who beats whom?" Trotsky stressed that the outcome depended not only on the rate of growth of the Soviet economy, but on two other factors: the relative strength of the capitalist and socialist sectors of the Soviet economy, and the relative growth of the Soviet economy compared to that of the capitalist world economy.

By January 1924 political power had been usurped from the Bolshevik vanguard by an emerging bureaucratic caste. In late 1924 Stalin proclaimed the possibility of "building socialism in one country." Initially developed as a rationale for economic autarky, this anti-Marxist dogma later served as the bureaucracy's ideological justification for forfeiting the cause of proletarian revolution internationally in a futile effort to appease world imperialism. Coming to the fore as a leading theoretician for Stalin, Bukharin argued to "build socialism even on a pauper technical basis" and made greater concessions to the wealthy peasants (kulaks) and private traders (NEPmen). These forces threatened to strangle the young Soviet workers state. With the kulaks withholding grain from the market and the country driven to the brink of disaster, Stalin broke with Bukharin in 1928 and implemented—albeit with adventurist and brutal methods—key policies advocated by Trotsky's Left Opposition, including the collectivization of agriculture and greatly speeding up the tempo of industrialization.

While Stalin's about-face staved off the immediate threat of capitalist counterrevolution, Stalin and his heirs rejected the Bolshevik understanding that a successful resolution to Lenin's question of "who beats whom" could ultimately only be realized on a world scale. Even as the NEP was instituted domestically, the Soviet regime of Lenin and Trotsky fought for the *international extension* of the revolution and the overthrow of imperialism worldwide, the prerequisite to building an international planned economy and establishing a socialist society of plenty. The nationalist betrayals by the Soviet bureaucracy under Stalin and his heirs ultimately led to the final undoing of the October Revolution in 1991-92.

Peter Turnley

Tiananmen Square, 1989: Student-centered protests sparked broader social upheaval, leading to workers revolt which was brutally suppressed by CCP bureaucracy.

Stalinist Gravediggers of Revolution

Beijing's "market reforms," which can be described as the NEP run amok, have greatly encouraged not only the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie and imperialists but domestic capitalist-restorationist forces as well. There is only one social force in China with the unmitigated interest to defeat these forces and expropriate the offshore bourgeoisie's holdings: the proletariat, sections of which, unlike its counterparts in East Europe and the USSR prior to counterrevolution, have already experienced the depredations of capitalist exploitation and attacks on state property. Fearful of the combative proletariat, the CCP regime dares not offer a glimmer of the political openness that accompanied the final demise of Gorbachev's Moscow Stalinist regime.

It is the Chinese working class that during the 1989 Tiananmen uprising displayed the awareness that bureaucratic caste rule was undermining the gains of the 1949 Revolution and that has the coherent social power to sweep away the CCP bureaucracy through proletarian political revolution. Such a revolution would have enormous effects throughout the region. It could evoke a working-class socialist overturn in Taiwan and encourage the proletariat of Japan, Asia's industrial powerhouse, and South Korea to overthrow their capitalist rulers. It would invigorate the worker and peasant masses of Vietnam and North Korea to cast off the Stalinist bureaucratic castes there. It would encourage as well the impoverished masses of the former Soviet Union to enter the road of proletarian revolution against their new capitalist rulers. The impact of a proletarian political revolution in the most populous country on earth would be worldwide, for example in South Africa, where smashing apartheid and instituting bourgeois "democracy" has manifestly not satisfied the aspirations of the masses.

The Chinese working class, before and since the Tiananmen upheaval, has engaged in thousands of local and regional strikes—in recent years, to the point of virtual insurrection against individual exploiters or the CCP betrayers. But without revolutionary leadership, that is, lacking a party based on the Leninist-Trotskyist program, the working class will not find the road to consummating proletarian political revolution. Unlike the *social* revolutions needed to overthrow the rule of the capitalist class in the U.S., Japan, etc. and institute a nationalized, planned economy, proletarian *political* revolution in China would be based on defense of nationalized property. The task of such a revolution would be to dismantle the bureaucratic CCP state apparatus and replace it with organs of proletarian class rule, that is, soviets (councils) of workers and peasants such as those that formed the basis of proletarian state power in the 1917 Bolshevik-led social revolution in Russia.

The Chinese working class must be broken from the nationalism preached by the CCP, becoming a rallying point for international proletarian revolution in the advanced countries. This is the only solution to the backwardness of their country which is starkly revealed by the overwhelming weight and wretchedness of peasant China. It is the rejection of such internationalism that links the leadership of Mao Zedong and his protégés to that of Deng Xiaoping and his followers.

Mao set the utopian goal of China going it alone without the vitally necessary access to advanced technique and methods that could be provided by socialist revolution in an advanced society. Mao's anti-internationalism eventually led him to side with the imperialists in their efforts to undermine the USSR. The current CCP leadership, following in Deng's wake, looks to the imperialist entrepreneurs and the reactionary offshore Chinese capitalists as the answer to China's backwardness—i.e., to those who would bury the 1949 Revolution—rather than to the *class* allies of the Chinese working class throughout the world, while continuing Mao's policy of consorting with the imperialists. To defend the gains of 1949, it is urgently necessary to assemble the cadres committed to building the revolutionary party of the Chinese working class as a section of a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International.

"Left" Apostles of Social Counterrevolution

This necessity of cohering a genuine Trotskyist nucleus is underscored by the fact that the self-described Trotskyists in Hong Kong march under the banner of bourgeois democracy, gilding the counterrevolutionary mobilizations in that city with the fool's gold of "self-determination" and people's "democracy." This is not surprising given that these groups, *October Review* and Pioneer, are supporters of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat, which hailed Polish Solidarność, the company union of Wall Street and the Vatican, as it led the first of the capitalist counterrevolutions in East Europe. The United Secretariat went on to cheer the overturn of the October Revolution led by Yeltsin and George Bush Sr.

On the very eve of Hong Kong's return to China, *October Review* (30 June 1997) offered the following: "We propose that the focal theme for the fights for political and economic rights can revolve around the demand for a democratic election of a Hong Kong People's Congress which makes major decisions relating to self-rule of Hong Kong by the people. In this struggle for political and social rights, the people of Hong Kong are now much more linked to the people of the mainland." That this statement amounted to a call for Hong Kong to act as a "democratic" spearhead for counterrevolution on the mainland was made clear by the fact that it made no mention of defense of the gains of the 1949 Revolution. Nor did it so much as mention the Hong Kong proletariat, doubtless because those workers are organized mostly in a trade-union federation linked to the Democratic Association for the Betterment of Hong Kong, which politically supports the CCP central government in Beijing.

Somewhat slicker, the Pioneer group (formerly New Sprouts Society) allows that a struggle under the bourgeois slogans of democracy and freedom could "only create conditions prevalent in today's Russia and East Europe" and that "The collapse of the Soviet workers states is objectively certainly a great defeat for the working class." But this is just so much cynicism, as Pioneer simultaneously claims that since the workers of the former Soviet bloc had been subjected to reactionary bureaucratic rule, the collapse of the Communist Party governments was "not a direct defeat of the working class: the worker masses do not feel that they have been defeated, and as a result do not suffer from deep depression and pessimism. On the contrary they feel on some level that it is the beginning of liberation" ("Fight for People's Socialism,"

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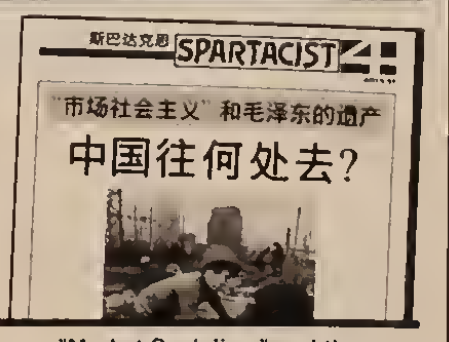

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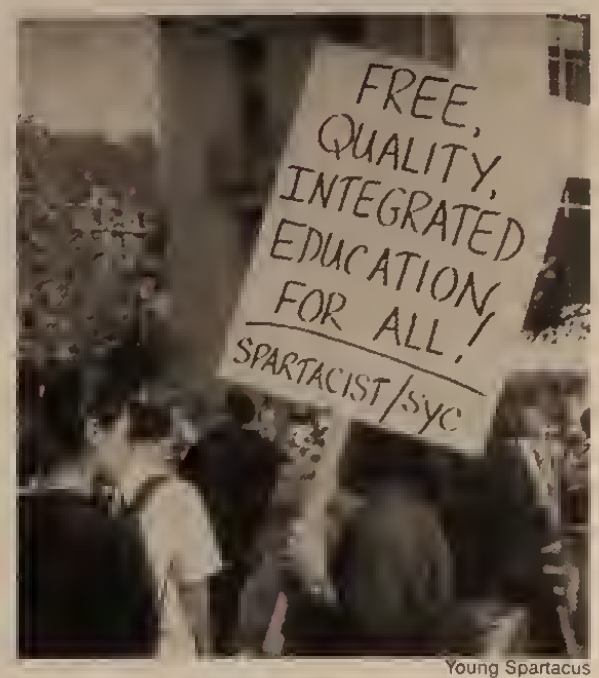
Young Spartacus

Charter Schools: An Attack on Public Education



SYC at Berkeley demo in defense of affirmative action, October 1997.

Young Spartacus

Letter

21 April 2003

dear comrades;

hi. my name is harmony. i am a subscriber to workers vanguard, a leftwinger, and a budding activist. the reason i am telling you all this is because i am about to criticize something i read in your paper under the spartacus youth club section, but first i want to establish that i am on your side. we share many political and moral views. so please don't take any of this as an attack.

my criticism is about charter schools. on page four of the march 28th, 2003 issue of workers vanguard, there is the "spartacus youth club ten points program". point number seven is about the separation of the church and the state (which i agree with) ... but it also says that there should be no government funding for charter schools.

this really upset me because certain charter schools have been very effective and helpful in communities where the regular public school system has failed in the past. for example, there is a branch of charter schools called KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Programs) which only sets up its schools in ghettos where the populations are mostly black and hispanic. these are kids who are more likely to 'fail' than their white peers ... but it is my opinion that it is the public school system that fails them. KIPP, on the other hand, has been very successful. for example, in one of their schools, only 3% of the school population was reading at grade level the first year it opened. by the very next year, 24% of the kids were reading at grade level. in an other school. its students scored among the top 2% in some state-test that measures academic ability. this was in an area where many kids in other public schools were dropping out or failing.

i actually have ambitions to open up my own charter school after graduating university. these schools shall, among other things, give a more ethnically diverse perspective in history/literature/social studies classes.

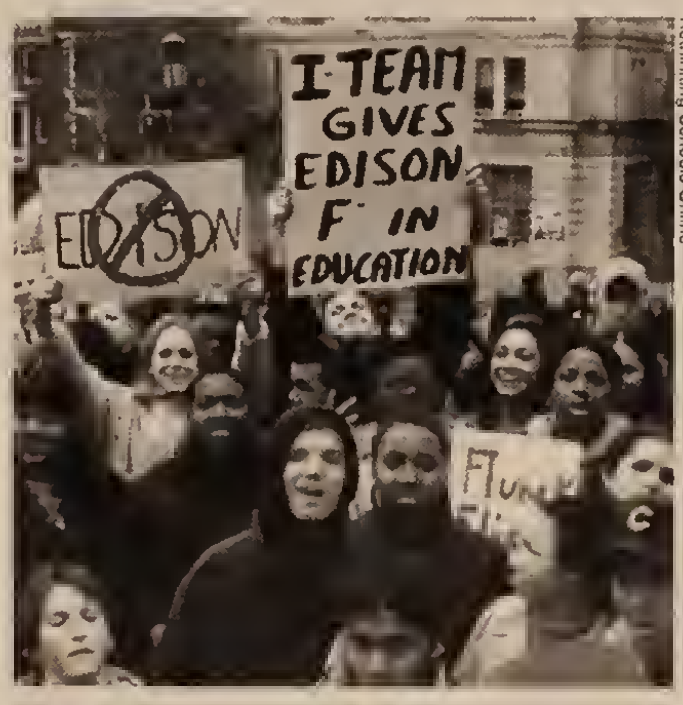
i don't see why there is anything wrong with charter schools. they are publicly funded. the only difference is that they are run by members of the community, instead of 'the board' who might as well be a bunch of corporate robots, faceless people behind desks who know very little and care even less about the challenges and needs of today's inner-city youth. a school run by community members is a good thing, because every community has its own unique set of challenges and needs, and thus, it should be allowed to have schools with a curriculum and philosophy that meets these challenges and needs.

like i said, i don't see why there is anything wrong with charter schools ... but maybe i am missing something. if there IS something wrong with them, PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHAT IT IS because i plan to devote most of my life to this, and if i am going to be wasting my life, i want to know now. this is a genuine and sincere question. please list all the reasons why you are against charter schools, both personally and as a representative of your organization. i will consider your side of the argument with an eager and open mind, just as i hope you have done the same for me and mine.

Peace, Love, & Light;
—harmony.

***Young Spartacus* Replies:**

Many young activists, eager to make their own individual impact to better society, find much attractive in small-scale charter schools run by "members of the community." But this is an illusion and a misrepresentation of the real motives behind charter schools. We oppose charter schools because they are an attack on the democratic right of public education and the separation of church and state; they increase racial segregation and class inequality in education and are utilized as a tool to smash the teachers unions.



Rethinking Schools Online

Community protest against Edison charter schools. Charter school programs have sparked public outcry from San Francisco to Philadelphia.

As a corollary to the American Dream, it is often asserted that all one needs to achieve the good life is a good education and a good "work ethic." Put plainly, this is false. We live in a fundamentally class-divided society predicated on an enforced social inequality; most people are seen by the ruling class as having no value except to make profits for the benefit of a tiny minority. All the "rules" and institutions are rigged to serve the powerful few, and oppression is built into the system and is daily reinforced in multiple ways. Social mobility is only possible for a very few exceptional individuals with extraordinary talent and plenty of luck since the existence of a thin layer of upper petty-bourgeois minorities assists the ruling class in keeping the rest of the oppressed quiescent. However, there is no way the working class as a whole or an oppressed race-color caste like black people can move "up" without shattering the entire social order—that is, by a social revolution.

The capitalist system utilizes racial oppression to keep the working class divided and wages down. Furthermore, the ruling class intentionally maintains a reserve pool of unemployed labor in order to keep wages across the board lower. While historically the black population filled that role—the last hired, first fired—increasingly, black youth are treated more as an expendable population, granted few choices in life: incarceration in prisons or schools built to resemble them, "McJobs" at miserable wages, or joining the military to kill and die for U.S. imperialism. Under capitalism, workers and the oppressed will never get the full education they deserve because the bourgeoisie desires to spend on education only what it will see back in profits. To make profit for the capitalists, workers should be able to read, but they don't need to be scientists or artists. However, black workers remain integrated into strategic industries in the U.S. and are the most unionized section of the proletariat. They will play a key role in the social revolution and the formation of a revolutionary government which uniquely can administer an education system that genuinely serves its students.

As Marxists, we defend universal public education as a democratic right gained, in this country, through the Civil War and the civil rights movement—that is, through hard struggle. To attempt to better education for blacks and minorities while maintaining and enforcing their segregation can only further undermine their right to decent education; in this racist capitalist system, separate can *never* be equal. Rather, as we say in our Ten Point Program, we are "For free, quality, integrated public education for all!"

Fifty years after *Brown v. Board of Education* ended legally sanctioned segregation, schools are in fact more segregated than before the civil rights programs were implemented. Generally, public schools in the U.S. are funded primarily by local property taxes, allowing those schools in affluent suburbs to provide much better education than those near the projects, where some have one book for every five students. Furthermore, students are "tracked" into a particular educational program from early on in life, a system designed to determine their future position in class society.

Students in inner-city schools confront conditions more suitable for a police state than for a place of study: metal detectors, video surveillance, strict hall and truancy monitoring by security guards, drug testing, locker searches. Recently, the mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, declared that, "If I have to put a police officer next to every kid, we will do it," (*Newsday*, 6 January) and the executive director of the National Association of School Resource Officers stated that school safety is the fastest growing area of law enforcement in the country (*New York Times*, 9 January). In one small example of this outrageous crackdown on students, a 14-year-old girl in Toledo, Ohio was handcuffed, arrested and booked on a misdemeanor for wearing a low-cut midriff top and refusing to cover it. In New Jersey, two elementary school boys were arrested and charged with terrorism for playing cops and robbers with paper guns. Given that 28 percent of all black men are destined in the capitalist U.S. to spend some time behind bars, it is clear that schools in the ghettos are increasingly becoming little more than preparatory schools for prisons.

The fact is that charter school "reform" does not alleviate any of these problems. Rather, charter schools have *increased* racial segregation and class inequality. *increased* the gap between the education available to inner-city black youth and that available to white suburban youth. and have gone a long way in destroying the separation of church and state. In fact, in 2003, three-quarters of black charter school students were enrolled in 27 percent of charter schools, and these schools were, on average, 80 percent black. as opposed to 54 percent black for public schools. A difference of lesser magnitude holds for Latino charter students. Given the fact that, in racist capitalist America, a mostly poor, black and minority school can never have the resources to give the same level of education as what white children in posh suburbs can get, one can only imagine the poor level of education provided by those predominantly minority schools.

While technically most charter schools are not allowed to be associated with religious institutions, the two are allowed to "enter into partnerships," according to the stipulations for funding set in the

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ISO Excludes Black Spartacists to Avoid Debate

What Strategy for Black Liberation?

We print below a leaflet which was issued by the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club on April 11.

On Thursday, April 1, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) held a discussion at San Francisco State titled "The Fight for Black Liberation Must Continue Today." A team of ISOers barred the way and shut the door on two black women communists, Carla and Wyolette, Spartacist comrades who came to engage them on the topic. An ISO member at SF State, Suzie, threatened to call the campus security guards, claiming the two women comrades were "violent," "disruptive" and there to "break legs and destroy our meeting." This is the kind of profiling of black people the campus security cops groove on, but the ISO is—at best—indifferent to the consequences of calling cops against black leftists in this profoundly racist society.

Naturally our comrades objected. The ISO woman promptly responded that campus security guards are "not cops, but workers." Security guards may be hired by private companies, but they are just as much a part of the "armed bodies of men" (to quote Engels) who defend private capitalist property as are the gun-toting cops directly employed by the state. What do they think those private security outfits are doing now in Iraq? Hostility to the hired guns of capital is ABC for Marxists, but not for the ISO.

The ISO has supported work actions by security guards in New York City, while its former Canadian affiliate supported a "strike" by jail guards in Toronto, even hailing the "militant reputation" of "correctional workers" (*Socialist Worker* [Canada], 6 March 1996). Does the ISO really think that death row prisoners like Kevin Cooper and Mumia Abu-Jamal should support better wages and working conditions for those who incarcerate them? Better conditions mean more and better guns and more leeway for guards to terrorize and kill prisoners! We in the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) are opposed to organizing the racist strikebreaking cops and prison guards as part of the labor movement. *Cops and prison guards out of the trade unions!*

Our comrades were kept out of the ISO's meeting because as revolutionary communists we threatened to expose the ISO's reformism. While the ISO can pay lip service to the fight for black liberation, in practice all they do is build illusions in the reformability of the capitalist system. The ISO sees racism as just one of many social ills produced by capitalism. In contrast the revolutionaries of the Spartacus Youth Club understand that the fight for black liberation is a key, strategic task of the American socialist revolution.

Without a correct approach to the struggle for black liberation, it is simply impossible to even talk of bringing the working class to the consciousness that it must make a revolution here in the most powerful imperialist country on earth. Every aspect of social reality in the United States is shaped by the legacy of black chattel slavery on which American capitalism was founded. It took a Civil War—which was also a social revolution—to get rid of black slavery. The post-war Reconstruction period was the most democratic period of American history. But the promise of black freedom was betrayed when the federal government withdrew the Union Army from the South in the Compromise of 1877, laying the basis for the reign of Jim Crow segregation across the South, enforced by the racist terror of the Ku Klux Klan.

WV Photo

New York City, October 1999: LBL banner at thousands-strong demonstration to stop the Klan. Labor's power can and must be mobilized in struggle against black oppression.

The civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s succeeded in eliminating legal segregation and won a few spots for blacks in universities like SF State so they could make it into the middle class. But the civil rights movement foundered when it came North and encountered the de facto segregation that is the reality for the majority of American blacks to this day. The forced segregation of blacks into a race-color caste at the bottom of society is the bedrock of American capitalism. Blacks are the last hired, first fired—and increasingly they are not even hired, while token gains like affirmative action programs are under attack. The SL and SYC defend affirmative action and fight for open admissions and free tuition to make higher education more of a reality for black and working-class youth. But the racist rulers regard the black masses as an expendable surplus population, left to rot in the inner cities, subject to high rates of diseases like AIDS and terrorized by the so-called "war on drugs." One in eight black men between the ages of 20 and 34 is currently behind bars, and 28 percent of all black men can expect to be imprisoned some time in their lives.

The ISO pushes the strategy of building "mass movements" to pressure the U.S. government and its cops, courts and prisons to be different. But this is precisely the strategy that derailed the civil rights movement—the attempt to pressure a wing of the racist American rulers (e.g. the Democratic Party) to change their priorities and make jobs, housing and equal rights available to all in this country. It is a pipe dream to think that "mass demonstrations" can pressure the capitalist rulers to fundamentally change the institutions on which their rule depends.

Blacks are a key and vital component of the working class in this country—just look at the powerful International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) here in the Bay Area. We seek to make the working class as a whole conscious that it must take up the fight against black oppression as part of the fight to liberate itself from capitalist exploitation. The Spartacist League initiated the Labor Black League, with which it works in fraternal alliance in the fight against black oppression. We fight for a multiracial revolutionary workers party that will emblazon on its banner the fight for black liberation as part of the fight for socialist revolution.

WV Photo

ISO shared platform with cops at Democrats' rally for "tolerance" for KKK in NYC, October 1999.

What about the ISO? Recently, they have tried to claim they have a strategy for black liberation by boasting of their work to save Kevin Cooper from the death penalty. It was certainly a good thing to fight against the execution of Kevin Cooper, a black man who was framed up and remains incarcerated even now. We joined in the protests, demanding Free Kevin Cooper Now! The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), a legal and social defense organization that takes up cases and causes in the interests of all working people, fight for the abolition of the racist death penalty. We make a point of opposing the death penalty for the guilty as well as the innocent; we do not accord the state the right to decide who lives and who dies.

In the 5 March 2004 issue of *Socialist Worker*, the ISO uncritically ran an article that states that the Free Kevin Cooper Committee for a California Moratorium "is bringing together the activists, community members, and people of faith who fought to stop Cooper's execution. The aim is to link that struggle with other cases on California's death row, and push politicians and legislators to win real justice for Kevin Cooper—and end all executions in California." Contrast this moral and liberal appeal to the capitalist state with the work of the Spartacist League, LBL and PDC around the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, America's foremost death row political prisoner. We concentrate on mobilizing the power of the working class, getting unions around the country to take up his case and contribute money to his defense. For example, the ILWU here took up Jamal's case as a result of the PDC's work.

An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the Philadelphia police and the FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15, because they saw in him the spectre of black revolution and defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. The state seeks to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq. We have always insisted that Jamal's case, far from being an aberration, throws a spotlight on the racist death penalty—today's legal lynching which descends from the system of black chattel slavery.

The difference between our strategy and the ISO's on black liberation was made crystal clear when in 1999 the murderous KKK planned to appear in New York City. We initiated a mass labor/black mobilization to stop the Klan. In contrast, the ISO sat on their hands until Democratic politicos like Al Sharpton moved to spike the labor-centered demonstration with a diversionary rally elsewhere that *offered to share a sound permit with the Klan*. Then the ISO joined the Democrats' "tolerance" rally for the KKK, sharing a platform with NYPD cops! This was not a question of "free speech" but the Klan's "right" to organize for murder. Some 8,000 trade unionists, blacks, immigrants and youth agreed with us and drove out the KKK murderers, despite the efforts of the Democrats and groups like the ISO to disarm the Klan's intended victims. In building this demo, we worked to win the proletariat to an understanding of its role as the gravedigger of the capitalist system and defender of the rights of black people

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Charter Schools...

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national No Child Left Behind Act. Many charter schools are clearly run by religious organizations—from Protestant churches to the Nation of Islam—and are at times housed in the "partnering" church. Some charters include texts like "Children's Bible Handbook" and "Exploring God's World: Science," and one school was even exempted from having to teach sex education because of religious reasons. The proponents of the charter school movement defend this practice as promoting "local values." Marxists oppose any and every move in the direction of official state religion; we oppose state persecution of or support for any religion and call for complete separation of church and state.

Many charter schools are now being run for profit by various corporations who make money by taking "administrative fees" from state or local governments. Edison Schools, who in spring 2002 was given charge of a huge portion of the Philadelphia school system, has become the most infamous, running schools so expensively, while at the same time creating such miserable schools, as to cause real public outcry. They cut every corner—in late 2002, Edison's CEO Chris Whittle even proposed using students as workers to cut costs: according to Philadelphians United to Support Public Schools, he commented that "600 pupils working one hour a day was the equivalent of 75 full-time adult staff" and suggested putting such a program in place by 2004. Even though they were technically not allowed to accept students based on anything other than age, in an attempt to pad their performance statistics, it was a detestable common practice for Edison to meet personally with the parents of special education kids and many blacks and Latinos to urge them to send their kids elsewhere.

Kamber/NY Times

L.A. Times

NY high school students face enhanced "security" crackdown (left). Caged minors being schooled in California juvenile detention facility. Contempt for black youth is a hallmark of racist American capitalism.

One of the main attractions of charter schools to bourgeois politicians like George W. Bush and Democrat Bill Clinton, while he was president, is that they are economical, i.e., they save money for the capitalists. But how, exactly, do charter schools save money over conventional schools? One is cutting corners, but many "conventional" public schools in the ghettos already do that. Mainly, it is by busting the teachers unions and thereby lowering teachers' wages and benefits. As a black Wisconsin Congresswoman who helped start the Milwaukee voucher program explained, "The main motivation of some of the choice [charter and voucher program] supporters was to weaken public education unions" (*Progressive*, January 2004). By opening up a new (or converting an old) shop, the vast majority of charter schools have gone around the unions, as well as standards for teachers' qualifications. In New York state, a 1998 law allows start-up charter schools that begin with less than 250 students (which most do since they usually only start with a grade or two) to be exempted from "collective-bargaining agreements" for as long as they exist, even when they grow beyond that size. In Michigan in 1999, for example, while all of the "conventional" public school districts had union representation, only 3.6 percent of charter schools were unionized. Because of this, many teachers unions have a stated position opposed to the charter movement and have, at the same time, attempted to unionize charter schools.

The state exists to defend the interests of the ruling class. In the arena of education, that means that it sides with the interests of the school administration and management, whether or not the school is a "conventional" public school. More than anything thing else, this concretely means that the state stands foursquare against the unions. If the fascination of the last two presidents for the union-busting charter school program didn't make this fact obvious enough, then the Secretary of Education's statement that the National Education Association, one of the largest unions in the country, was like "a terrorist organization" should make it crystal clear. (That he later modified his comments, calling them instead a group of obstructionists, should fool no one.)

Anness/Record

228 New Jersey teachers were jailed for striking, late 2001. The capitalist state, school administrations seek to bust the unions.

It is conceivable that a particular charter school might perform better than the horrible standards set by "conventional" capitalist education, though the very limited statistics now available don't lead to that conclusion. Our young correspondent holds up as an example the KIPP program, but their program in fact seems to be exorbitantly authoritarian and oppressive to both students and teachers. KIPP's program is extremely burdensome: school hours run from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. most of the week with an additional four hours on Saturdays; summer vacation is shortened by one month; there is a dress code; homework must be at least two hours every night by regulation, and parents must sign contracts saying they will supervise their children every night as they do their homework. Teachers are forced to be on call 24 hours a day, by cell phone, to respond to children's questions. A system of "incentives and disincentives" is set up for the students and their teachers in order to foster what must be an insane amount of competition. For students, these include granting "KIPP dollars" to students based on how well they do, which must be signed off by their parents weekly. At one of their founding schools, one rule states: "At KIPP-Houston, students who break the rules—by failing to do the homework, showing disrespect toward an adult, visiting the bathroom without permission—go to 'the porch'; they go to classes, but they wear their KIPP shirts inside out and cannot talk or eat with their classmates." That KIPP is "monetarily competitive"—a fact which landed George W. Bush as a public supporter of the organization—can fundamentally only be due to the anti-union character of charter schools in general.

Charter school programs have sparked public protest. Best known were the protests against the Edison school takeover in Philadelphia, but that isn't the only place. Protest at some charter schools in St. Louis, for example, first began when they were converted and put under private company management last September, with a demonstration of students carrying the gravestones of closed buildings. Within a month, school engineers held a two-day sick-out, leaving four schools without power, and then in November two hundred teachers followed suit with their own two-day sick-out. In Detroit last year, school was canceled for a day as thousands of teachers planned to protest the legislation that would allow 150 new charter schools to open in Michigan over ten years, and before the protest happened, the plan was abandoned.

We, as revolutionaries, stand against every instance of injustice and discrimination; we fight for free public education through the university level for everyone who wants it, for open admissions with a living stipend so that kids from poor families can go to school, for school busing programs to achieve racial integration. Charter schools are a step in the wrong direction—every attack on public education and every relaxation of uniform educational standards is a device to increase racial segregation and inequality between schools and between students.

Point seven of the SYC Ten Point Program reads, in full, "Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or 'charter' schools!" See *WV* No. 800, 28 March 2003, for the full Ten Point Program of the SYC. ■

Black Liberation...

(continued from page 7)

and all the oppressed. The ISO's unity with the Democrats in building "tolerance" for the Klan shows how the ISO acts as an obstacle to the fight for the independent mobilization of the working class in its own interests against the entire racist system of capitalism.

Although the ISO does not today call for a vote for the Democratic Party, it has supported the "third" capitalist party, the Greens, like Ralph Nader in the 2000 presidential election and Matt Gonzalez in his recent campaign for SF mayor. They are currently debating whether or not to support Nader in this year's presidential election. Some ISOers are arguing that, unlike in 2000, Nader is not supportable this time around. What has changed? Nader was then, as he is now, a capitalist politician and shill for the Democratic Party. The SYC understands that capitalist politicians, be they black, white, Green, Democrat or Republican, cannot be fighters for black rights because they uphold and defend the system responsible for black oppression—capitalism.

In fact, Nader scarcely ever mentioned black oppression, giving even less lip service to black rights than your average Democratic Party politician. Nader's avoidance of black oppression stems from his promotion of American capitalist "democracy" as a force for progress in the U.S. and abroad. On the campaign trail, when questioned by a black community activist in Seattle about his chronic inability to reach out to black people, Nader replied: "You ask what I have done to reach out to the black community and address racial issues and I ask you, how many black people did you bring here today to hear me and support this campaign?" (*ColorLines*, "Ralph Nader's Racial Blindspot," 17 August 2000). Here is a politician who treats black people as voting cattle, yet in their articles at the time, the ISO in effect dismissed Nader's evasion on the black question—the question of the American revolution—as a mere character flaw.

Central to the fight for a multiracial revolutionary workers party is the struggle against the bureaucrats in the trade unions who keep labor tied to their enemies in the capitalist parties. The ISO, however, *supports* pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucrats, so long as they talk out of the left side of the mouth. The ISO poses an *obstacle* to building a revolutionary party by polishing the chains that bind the oppressed to their capitalist exploiters. What else could you expect from an organization that from its inception has refused to defend the Soviet Union when it existed and China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam today? The revolutions in these countries overthrew the exploitative system of capitalism, serving as inspiration to those fighting in America against black oppression. The Spartacists, as genuine Trotskyists, have always fought for the *unconditional defense* of workers states where capitalism has been overthrown and for political revolution to oust the Stalinist parasitic castes, as part of the struggle for world revolution. As Leon Trotsky said in one of his documents on the defense of the Soviet Union in 1940, "Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones" ("Balance Sheet of the Finnish Events," 1940, *In Defense of Marxism*).

Those interested in the fight for black liberation and for workers revolution should check out the SYC. Stop by our literature tables at noon every Thursday, and come to our public classes on Marxism! ■

Columbia...

(continued from page 12)

Congress or at labor board hearings, that the decisive gains of the labor movement are won. The leadership of the GSEU is undercutting the strike by telling students that crossing picket lines to attend class is fine. UPS Teamsters, whose hard-fought 1997 strike was a victory, have pledged to honor the GSEU pickets, and other strike supporters should follow suit. Yesterday, after an SYC member informed UPS workers of the strike, they refused to cross the picket line in order to make scheduled deliveries on campus.

Some professors are trying to move classes off campus. Even if well-intentioned, moving classes off campus actually helps the university keep functioning and is counterposed to shutting Columbia down. This gesture, facilitated by the provost, simply saves the university electricity and at bottom constitutes strike-breaking by allowing the business of the university to continue with a minimum of disruption. Instead, professors and graduate students should bring out classes to *build* the picket lines. Thousands of students and workers at Columbia's gates would help pave the way to victory.

The fight for union rights is a fight against the administration. The administration's hostility toward the unions on campus reflects its class allegiance—it runs Columbia on behalf of the Board of Trustees, a group of capitalist magnates such as the vice chair of J.P. Morgan Chase and an executive director at Morgan Stanley. This university is a chief think tank for the U.S. ruling class, a training ground for future imperialist warmongers

March 9: SYC speakout against racist provocations at Columbia.

and anti-union lawyers and a notorious racist slumlord. As well, the administration has aided and abetted the government's anti-immigrant witchhunt by turning over immigrant students' names to the federal government in 2001 in the wake of Bush's declaring his anti-immigrant, anti-labor "war on terror." ***Abolish the administration!***

Private universities like Columbia should be nationalized and run by those who work, teach and study there. Against the race and class bias that permeates higher education under capitalism, we demand open admissions and no tuition for all with a paid living stipend, posing the fight for the universal right to free, quality, integrated education. Columbia's gates should be thrown open—including to those who work there, their children and residents of neighboring Harlem. ***For student/faculty/worker control of the universities!***

The SYC seeks to link the struggles of students with the social power of labor. Campus workers were among those who endorsed the SYC-initiated united-front protest on March 9 against the recent series of racist provocations on campus. Our argument against appealing to the administration to act on behalf of minority students at that time is borne out by the example of its aggressive opposition to a graduate student union. The campus branch of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) opposes our position and did not endorse, as it instinctively follows behind the prevailing sentiment among campus liberals. The first day of the GSEU strike, some members of the ISO walked the picket line—but others crossed it to set up a lit table on campus *behind the picket lines*, which goes against even elementary trade-union consciousness. Honoring picket lines for the ISO is strictly a matter of personal convenience.

As one campus maintenance worker remarked to a *Workers Vanguard* salesman during our campaign to build the March 9 rally, Columbia is run by a gang of union-busters. In 2002, the provost docked those clerical workers who did not report to work in solidarity with the GSEU a day's pay. Pro-union students and workers must demand: ***No reprisals against striking students and their supporters!*** All workers at Columbia, whether graduate students, maintenance technicians or support staff, have common interests best served by organizing into one campus union. The current division of the workforce into multiple unions dilutes the potential power of labor on campus.

The battle by the graduate students for their union comes in the context of the U.S. imperialist ruling class's general onslaught against working people and the oppressed at home and abroad. The union movement as a whole is hamstrung by its leaders who preach reliance on the Democratic Party as the presidential elections draw nearer and nearer. Showing that the Democrats are no less a party of war and racism than the Republicans, John Kerry backed the U.S. colonial conquest of Iraq and wants to send in more troops; at the same time, he stands behind the array of reactionary "war on terror" laws. Successful class struggle requires the complete independence of the working class from all parties and agencies of the capitalists. Working people need their own party that fights for the rule of labor. The SYC intervenes on campus as partisans of the working class in its historic mission to sweep away the capitalist system that is based on exploitation, racist repression and imperialist war and seeks to win students and youth to a revolutionary class-struggle perspective. ***Build picket lines—don't cross them! Boycott classes! Shut down Columbia! Victory to the GSEU strike!***■

Hong Kong...

(continued from page 5)

resolution passed at the 1993 New Sprouts Society conference).

While Pioneer likes to put forward a "proletarian" face by lacing its statements with elementary economic demands, such as a minimum wage, and calls to "tax the corporations," it brazenly supports the anti-Communist protests in Hong Kong. In a New Year's Day 2004 statement, Pioneer proclaims: "The Great July First Demonstration and the defeat of the Loyalists in the District Council Elections have expanded the people's aspirations and destroyed the prestige of the SAR government." Leaving no doubt as to what piper calls its tune, Pioneer blazoned in the headline of its statement: "For General Elections Through Universal Franchise and Free Nominations!"—a call virtually identical to the demand issued by U.S. imperialism's representative in Hong Kong the month before.

For all the hemming and hawing about the pluses and minuses of the workers states under bureaucratic caste rule, Pioneer's real message is that "democracy is a very urgent need in China and it would indeed be a gigantic step forward if bourgeois democracy is realized there" ("Fight for People's Socialism"). But capitalist restoration in China would be a brutal process that would subject the masses to immense social dislocation, providing no basis for bourgeois democracy. In East Europe and Russia the only "liberation" experienced by the workers has been from the burden of living a too-long life, their now-earlier demise hastened by the joblessness, poor health care and hopelessness they face in the aftermath of capitalist counterrevolution.

In his 1918 polemic *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin answered those who brandish bourgeois "democracy" in order to attack the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist rule, counterposing the *proletarian* democracy of workers soviets:

> "[Kautsky] fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state. Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *enlist* the people, specifically the *exploited* people, in the work of administration. The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority.
>
> "The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which helps them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way."

In embryo, the various workers organizations that arose in China during the Tiananmen upheaval, an incipient political revolution, displayed not a few of the characteristics described by Lenin. It was these groups that helped organize resistance to the declaration of martial law on 20 May 1989, forming a "workers picket corps" and "dare to die" teams to protect protesting students against repression. Workers groups began to take on responsibility for public safety after governmental authority in Beijing evaporated in the face of the mass protests and the police vanished from the streets. And it was the organized workers who prepared for the tasks of transporting food and other vital necessities, preparations cut short by the June 3-4 massacre. It was during the period immediately before the massacre and under the protection of the workers groups that the streets of Beijing were crowded with ordinary people arguing about politics, expressing their opinions on the way forward and appealing to troops sent to crush the protests. In short, during the Tiananmen upheaval it was the workers groups that, in deed, defended and oversaw this blossoming of freedom and prepared to take the functions of society in hand.

But even during these events, the workers groups on their own did not go beyond upholding "democracy" as freedom from bureaucratic constraint and not as the product of rule by workers soviets. Not infrequently, the workers looked to supposedly sympathetic elements of the bureaucracy for guidance. Moved to rebel by the bureaucracy's attack on the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed jobs, housing and other benefits, the workers did not arrive at the understanding that they needed to effect a proletarian political overturn to preserve and extend the gains of the 1949 Revolution.

What was crucially missing in China in 1989 was a revolutionary party—or even the nucleus of such a party—representing the interests of the proletariat, to provide the necessary leadership to the workers in struggle. Since that time, some of the workers leaders, notably Han Dongfang, have become advocates of a "democratization" in China such as was visited on the proletariat in the aftermath of the counterrevolution in East Europe and the USSR. The Chinese working class has demonstrated its valor and, if necessary, willingness to die to preserve the gains of the 1949 Revolution. But without a party committed to defending the existing gains of the working class—for example, the overturns of the capitalist order in Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea as well as China—without an international party committed to forging links between the Chinese working class and the powerful Japanese proletariat, without a party that is a tribune for all those wronged by the imperialists and by bureaucratic caste rule, it cannot triumph. It is only revolutionary Trotskyism that provides the program necessary to build such a party. And it is the International Communist League that has fought for that program against those who sing hymns of praise to bourgeois democracy and counterrevolution.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

War...

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with hijacked aircraft in New York City! But their attention was focused on their main obsessions: capitalist counterrevolution in China and "regime change" in Iraq. Moreover, Osama bin Laden had been America's creature, armed and equipped along with the Taliban to fight U.S. imperialism's "holy war," launched under Democrat Jimmy Carter against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan. Like Dr. Frankenstein, the U.S. rulers didn't calculate that their monster, bin Laden, would get up and turn on his creator.

As we wrote in a prescient statement by the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League, just the day after the destruction of the World Trade Center:

> "The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule. It's an opportunity for the exploiters to peddle 'one nation indivisible' patriotism to try to direct the burgeoning anger at the bottom of this society away from themselves and toward an indefinable foreign 'enemy,' as well as immigrants in the U.S., and to reinforce their arsenal of domestic state repression against all the working people....
>
> "In the aftermath of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the American imperialist rulers have sought to find a surrogate for the war against 'godless Communism' in the spectre of 'Islamic terrorism.' This is the new external enemy against which they have sought to rally the population, and they aim to use the attack on the World Trade Center for furthering public support for their imperialist terror abroad, fostering the lie that the working people of the U.S. have a common interest with their capitalist exploiters."
>
> —*WV* No. 764, 14 September 2001

Dual Parties of Evil at Home and Abroad

While the World Trade Center smoldered, Condoleezza Rice convened a high-level meeting of Bush aides to "think about how do you capitalize on these opportunities to fundamentally change American doctrine, and the shape of the world, in the wake of September 11th" (*Asia Times*, 30 March 2003). Two damaging exposés by Washington insiders, *Against All Enemies* by Richard Clarke and *Plan of Attack* by Bob Woodward, reveal the White House's cynical and murderous opportunism. Clarke, the counterterrorism expert appointed by Clinton and kept on by Bush, managed the September 11 crisis for the White House. He sent Vice President Cheney and aides to a bunker in the East Wing, and then set off to join them. Fuming that his warnings about Al Qaeda had been ignored, he recounts: "I turned the corner and found a machine gun in my face. Cheney's security detail had set up outside the vault doors, with body armor, shotguns, and MP5 machine guns. Although they knew me, they were not about to open the vault door." Clarke pleaded, "*Hey guys, it's me!*" In a September 11 meeting with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, Clarke claims surprise that they "were going to take advantage of this national tragedy to promote their agenda about Iraq."

Woodward spells out that "regime change" in Iraq "was the standing policy inherited from the Clinton administration.... A 1998 law passed by Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton authorized up to $97 million in military assistance to Iraqi opposition forces 'to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein' and 'promote the emergence of a democratic government'." Clinton began the pipeline of money to the embezzler Ahmed Chalabi, now a prominent figure in the U.S.-installed Iraqi stooge "Governing Council." (Chalabi also had a fan in "anarchist" professor Noam Chomsky [see *WV* No. 822, 19 March].) Secretary of State Colin Powell and his aide Richard Armitage told Woodward, "most Iraqis thought Chalabi was a knucklehead." Per Woodward, animosities between the State Department and the Pentagon are such that "knucklehead" would be almost a term of endearment.

Pentagon neocons Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith "chicken-baited" Powell, the butcher of the first Gulf War, as representing the "Department of Nice" for his hesitations about invading Iraq this time. According to Woodward, Powell kept shaking his head and saying, "This is lunacy" and cursed the Pentagon brass as "Feith's Gestapo office." Yet it was Powell who held up the vial of imitation anthrax in a stage-managed moment at the United Nations to beat the drums for war, on the lying pretext that Iraq had "weapons of mass destruction." For all the differences in style, Powell and the neocons push the same policy, just as the Democrats and the Republicans do. The difference is the packaging. The Democrats would prefer to camouflage U.S. imperialist war with the backing of the UN, while the "Bush doctrine" is one of preemptive strike and allies he damned.

Steven Rubin

Protest outside Brooklyn detention center calling to free immigrant detainees, 2003.

The Clinton administration waged a ruthless war against Iraq, including thousands of bombing sorties and the UN starvation blockade which killed ***one and a half million people***, particularly children and the elderly. When Clinton's Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was asked about this monstrous crime, she serenely opined: "We think the price was worth it." The UN weapons inspections and disarmament which took place during the Clinton administration ensured that Iraq would be defenseless when the time came for the Bush administration to launch an open war on Iraq. Bush went into Iraq because it was easy, but not North Korea because it has nukes. Now as the presidential race heats up, Democratic contender and U.S. Senator John Kerry is running as a more responsible war candidate than Bush, pledging to increase the number of troops and to stay the course in Iraq. Kerry immediately chastised Spain's new prime minister Zapatero for vowing to pull Spanish troops from Iraq. So much for the Democratic Party "lesser evil!"

No to the Draft! U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!

Fear of lingering "Vietnam syndrome," i.e., the unwillingness of the American population to shed blood in another losing venture for U.S. imperialism, has cynically prompted the rulers to bigger and bigger lies. Since the 1991 Gulf War, it has been Pentagon policy to limit photographs of body bags and coffins returning home for burial. A woman and her husband were fired by a Pentagon contractor for violating policy by snapping a picture of flag-draped coffins in a transport plane being loaded in Kuwait. With their racist disregard for Iraqi life, the American military occupiers destroy hospitals to treat the wounded and barely report the huge numbers of Iraqi dead. And Bush is so determined to "disappear" the American dead that he hasn't turned up at one funeral for a soldier killed in Iraq.

With its pretensions to be the friend of the worker and the oppressed, the Democratic Party is the historic party of big war mobilizations. The Democrats have the popularity not to have to resort to privatized mercenaries, unlike the Republican gang in the White House. Black Democratic Party Congressmen Charles Rangel and John Conyers are pushing to reinstitute the draft. In remarks delivered to the Washington press club on April 15, Rangel motivated conscripting men and women, stating, "how proud all of them should be during the time of national emergency that they will be able to serve our great country." Tell it to former soldier Nicole Goodwin, a black woman who returned from Iraq to a cot in a homeless shelter with her one-year-old baby! The real national emergency is brutal capitalist exploitation, union-busting, poverty, homelessness, unemployment, systematic racial oppression, murderous police violence and increased segregation. These are the issues that no Democrat or Republican will address except in empty electioneering speeches to be honored in the breach, because the solution requires a thoroughgoing socialist revolution to reorder the priorities according to the needs of working people, not the profits of the ruling class.

The race and class bias inherent in who dies for U.S. imperialism will not be redressed by reinstituting the draft. The sons and daughters of the ruling class, like George Bush, can always find a way to stay stateside while the sons and daughters of the working class are sent to die. The excruciating contradiction of being sent to fight for a country that promises you nothing but inequality, and a welcome mat nowhere but prison and the army, sparked black veterans to lead social struggles upon their return home from both world wars, Korea and Vietnam. Rangel and Conyers seek to dissipate the anger that already seethes in the ghettos and barrios of this country, where more black youth end up in prison than in college. Their push for the draft back in January 2003 merely paved the way for Republican Senator Hagel and Democratic Senator Biden, influential members of the Foreign Rela-

Racist Roundup of Immigrants at Newark Airport

The Department of Homeland Security has been conducting racist dragnets of Latino people traveling by air and subjecting them to arrest, jail and deportation. Between April 8 and 13, passengers on four separate flights arriving from Los Angeles at Newark airport were confronted by federal agents. A total of 158 people, undocumented Latino immigrants and those who came to meet their flights, were hauled off to detention centers. Most, if not all, now face deportation proceedings.

This is a flagrant example of racial profiling by the cops and an escalation of the government's all-sided attack on civil rights. Passengers on domestic flights are not required to carry a passport or show immigration documents. So how did the Feds decide who was an "illegal" immigrant? "Did they ask only people who looked Latino?" asked one immigrant rights advocate (*New York Times*, 10 April). After Latinos, who's next to be screened by the cops as they step off a plane? People with Arab-sounding names? Black people? Youth with anti-war buttons on their backpacks?

Speaking of the Newark detentions, a representative of the National Council of La Raza declared, "We haven't heard anything like this before." But if large-scale arrests of airline passengers on immigration charges is something new, raids on work locations and mass roundups of undocumented workers are a customary part of the racist abuse the capitalists inflict on immigrants. On April 8, federal agents in San Diego arrested 31 Latino shipyard workers who worked for Continental Maritime, a division of the defense contractor Northrop Grumman, along with an additional 12 people who were found in their homes. Three face criminal charges of re-entering the country after being deported; the others face deportation.

Under cover of the "war against terror," the government has greatly escalated its witchhunt of immigrants. Now the Department of Homeland Security is pushing a plan to "deputize" local and state police to arrest immigrants on the basis of federal immigration statutes, even if they are not accused of breaking a state law. Alabama and Florida are already participating in the program—which is based on a 1996 law signed by President Bill Clinton—while Virginia, Colorado and Idaho are considering signing up. In Los Angeles County, the sheriff's office is reportedly close to an agreement to allow booking officers to seek out undocumented immigrants in county jails for deportation.

It is vitally necessary for the entire working class to defend the victims of the government's racist anti-immigrant roundups. We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants; all those who arrive here, by whatever means, should have the full rights available to all Americans. We say: ***Free all the detainees! Drop the charges! Stop the racist anti-immigrant dragnets!***

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tions Committee, to float the question now, blathering about "shared sacrifice." Legislation has been introduced in both chambers to revive the draft, although no action has been scheduled on either measure. We say, not a penny or a man (or a woman) for U.S. imperialism!

The Domestic Face of the "War on Terror"

Bloody imperialist war has been accompanied by a devastating assault on civil liberties. The USA-Patriot Act, adopted with overwhelming support of the Democrats (including John Kerry) has shredded the civil rights of labor, the left, immigrants, and everybody else. Bush and the Democrats are trying to outdo one another in the "war on terror" in the run-up to the elections. In the immediate aftermath of September 11, striking schoolteachers in New Jersey were pilloried as Taliban for breaking the reactionary "national unity" crusade. Tom Ridge of the Department of Homeland Security personally intervened to threaten longshoremen organized by the ILWU on the West Coast that any strike action by them would be against the interests of national security.

Bush wants an early renewal of the Patriot Act. The Democrats, mindful of protests by civil libertarians, now backpedal on their support for this, but they brag about other "get tough on terror" schemes they have instituted and more they will institute if they get the chance. The Homeland Security Act originated in concept as the "Lieberman bill," introduced by the Democrats' last vice presidential candidate. John Kerry and the Democrats support a version of legislation for a new sweeping domestic intelligence agency and the creation of a "national intelligence director." As the ACLU's executive director said in a press release, such an agency "could easily employ the same kind of dirty tricks the CIA uses overseas here in the United States against American citizens."

These days citizenship is already no protection against the ravages of the U.S. government. U.S. citizen Jose Padilla, arrested in Chicago, was deemed by Ashcroft's "Justice" Department an "enemy combatant" and dumped in a military brig in South Carolina. An *amicus* brief filed by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Padilla states:

> "The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population. The Executive's declaration that its 'war against terrorism' forfeits constitutional protections for designated individuals, echoes the regimes of shahs and colonels and presidents 'for life' from the Near East to Africa to Latin America, to justify the mass imprisonment and unmarked graves of political dissidents. Like them, the Executive is proclaiming the ***right to disappear*** citizens of its choosing."

Indeed, America's founding fathers would be jailed under the Patriot Act today for defending the right to resistance to oppression! Patrick Henry intoned, "Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect every one who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are ruined." It doesn't take a Marxist or even a civil libertarian to find the assaults on civil liberties today disturbing. But this anger is getting channeled into the "anybody but Bush" campaign.

The preceding eight years of the Democratic Clinton administration provided Bush more than fertile ground for the assault on civil liberties. After the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, for example, the Clinton administration enacted the "Omnibus Counterterrorism Act," under which immigrants and all "aliens" can be subjected to secret trials without any charges being presented. *Habeas* petitions were virtually eliminated for death row prisoners under the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which vastly increased the number of crimes for which the state could apply the death penalty. Most of the immigrants who were rounded up by the Bush administration after September 11 as potential "terrorists" and held for months without any charges being presented were targeted not under Bush's Patriot Act, but under Clinton's 1996 Immigration Act. Besides vastly stepping up state repression, the other hallmark of the Clinton years was his fulfillment of his vow to "end welfare as we know it," throwing poor, single black mothers into union-busting "workfare" jobs, or terminating welfare benefits.

Break with the Democrats, Build a Workers Party!

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and deformed workers states in East Europe in 1991-92, the workers and oppressed internationally suffered a world-historic defeat. The "death of communism" heralded by the U.S. imperialists was the basis on which U.S. imperialism has launched increasingly frequent, bloody and aggressive wars, beginning with the first Persian Gulf War under George Bush Sr.; continuing with wars and occupations in the Balkans, Haiti, Somalia and Iraq as well as the bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan under Clinton; and culminating (so far) in George Bush Jr.'s "war without end." These were preceded by the U.S. invasions of Panama and Grenada, which had a gratuitous quality, but set the pattern for imperialist invasions as allegedly bloodless operations. At the same time, the widely accepted belief that "communism is dead" has resulted in an international retrogression of consciousness so that workers in general do not identify their struggles with the liberating goals of Marxism. The forces most prominently seen as opposing U.S. imperialism are reactionary Islamic fundamentalists that were given birth by, particularly, the CIA—forces violently antithetical to Marxism and the genuine interests of the oppressed.

Today many people on the supposedly "socialist" left accept the ruling class' assertion that "communism is dead" and that there is no longer any point in fighting to destroy capitalism and establish a socialist society that has no need of war or racism. In this they echo the ruling class which would have you believe that the interests of the working class are identical with those of the exploiters. These reformists would have you believe that the only task ahead for the working class and oppressed is to "dump Bush" in favor of bringing in whatever "lesser evil" the capitalists might offer in his place.

At the conclusion of his book, Bob Woodward cites a conversation he had with Bush in the Oval Office. "The upcoming presidential election would perhaps be the most immediate judgment on the war, but certainly not the last. How would history judge his Iraq War? I asked." Woodward notes, "Bush smiled. 'History,' he said, shrugging, taking his hands out of his pockets, extending his arms out and suggesting with his body language that it was so far off. 'We won't know. We'll all be dead'." As Chris Floyd commented in the *Moscow Times* (April 23-29), "No fine, faith-filled talk here about God and Jesus and the immortal soul responsible for its actions throughout all eternity—the kind of zealous patter Bush favors in public statements. This was just the cold, rotten, meaningless core of his grand vision—'we'll all be dead.' So who cares? *Après moi, le déluge.*"

Today's world confirms more acutely than ever the words of Rosa Luxemburg nearly one hundred years ago, that the choices ahead for humanity are socialism or barbarism. We aim to build a party that mobilizes the tremendous social power that exists in the proletariat, fighting in defense of the oppressed internationally to bring down U.S. and all imperialism through workers revolution.■

Vanunu...

(continued from page 1)

wheelchair. Three weeks later they killed his successor, Dr. Abdel Aziz Rantisi, in another missile strike. The threat against Arafat is but the latest installment of the Zionist rulers' long history of *assassination as policy*. As we wrote following Yassin's assassination, "The Israeli ruling class is sending a message to the Palestinian masses—to those imprisoned in Gaza by an electric fence and those trapped in the West Bank by concrete walls—that it has license to obliterate every Palestinian leader of any stripe" (*WV* No. 823, 2 April).

When Bush endorsed Sharon's plan to "withdraw" from the Gaza Strip while building up Israeli settlements in the West Bank, he reversed nearly four decades of formal U.S. policy with a wave of his hand. Rantisi's assassination immediately followed. At least 25 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops in the past week. Sharon's proposed "withdrawal" from Gaza is a ploy to reinforce Israeli control of the West Bank and destroy any vestige of Palestinian resistance. *Hands off Arafat! Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!*

Vanunu: a Truthteller the Zionists Fear

In 1986, Vanunu, a former technician at the Israeli nuclear weapons facility in Dimona, was kidnapped by the secret police (Mossad), thrown into a desert prison in Ashkelon and sentenced to 18 years by a secret military court for revealing to the London *Sunday Times* that Israel had amassed upwards of 200 nuclear warheads. Vanunu's disclosures were a great service to all humanity. When he was sentenced on charges of aiding and abetting "the enemy in time of war," we wrote, "Who is the enemy? What war? To the Zionist nuclear madmen, it doesn't matter—they are at war with the whole world, everybody is the enemy" (*WV* No. 450, 8 April 1988). Vanunu's revelations made clear that Israel's capitalist rulers had enough nuclear weapons not only to incinerate every Arab capital, but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well. Israel's nuclear arsenal was built up with the active support of the U.S., France and other imperialist powers, as part of their war drive against the then-existing Soviet degenerated workers state and to reinforce the Israeli garrison state as their gendarme in the region.

The Zionist butchers are putting around Vanunu a small replica of the wall they are constructing to confine and strangle the Palestinian people in the West Bank. Under emergency laws enacted in 1945 under the British Mandate, Vanunu is now prohibited from leaving Israel for at least a year, visiting foreign embassies or approaching borders, ports or airports, and even having any contact with foreigners—either in person or through correspondence. He is forbidden to give interviews about his work at Dimona and is required to inform the cops if approached for this purpose. Vanunu will be under 24-hour surveillance and as the *Financial Times* (20 April) reports, his phone will be tapped. Vanunu will require police permission in order to leave Jaffa, where he will be living, and must advise authorities 24 hours in advance if he plans to sleep at another address.

Many people around the world revere Vanunu as a hero. Upon his release Vanunu announced, "I am proud and happy to do what I did." Having spent more than eleven years in solitary confinement, Vanunu denounced the "very cruel and barbaric treatment" meted out by Israeli security services, and promised, "You didn't succeed to break me, you didn't succeed to make me crazy."

As a Sephardic Jew whose family had emigrated from Morocco, it was Vanunu's own experience of discrimination at the hands of the European-derived Ashkenazi establishment that led to his active alienation from Zionism. He took up the cause of Palestinian rights as a student at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University, where he befriended Bedouin and Palestinian students and participated in protests for Palestinian equality and against the 1982 Lebanon war.

The ICL and the Partisan Defense Committee have actively fought for Vanunu's freedom for 18 years. In June 1987, Vanunu's former companion and spokesman Judy Zimmet, joined Mumia Abu-Jamal's wife Wadiya in speaking from the platform of an SL forum in New York City devoted to class-struggle defense. On April 20, the PDC wrote the Israeli embassy: "We vehemently protest the continued attack on Mordechai Vanunu. For his courageous action 18 years ago the working people, indeed all of humanity, owe Vanunu a tremendous debt of gratitude." End all restrictions on Vanunu!■

Australia...

(continued from page 3)

action to demand: *Free the arrested 15 February Redfern militants! Drop all the charges now!*

For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

To prevail against the might of the capitalist state, it is necessary to mobilise the social power of the organised working class. Central to the SL forum was our program for union/minority/black mobilisations against racist state terror. This program contrasts with calls promoted by groups such as Socialist Alliance for a "full independent inquiry" or for a royal commission to investigate police actions. Referring to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, concluded in 1991, which exonerated the cops in all 99 cases it reviewed, our forum presenter noted that any inquiry set up by the capitalist state would only be a whitewash. The "legal system" that would conduct or oversee such an "inquiry" is fresh from the union-busting Cole Royal Commission, which targeted the CFMEU construction union, and is currently prosecuting and viciously denying bail to the Redfern militants! No "independence" can be expected from this state whose army is part of the U.S.-led Coalition that is brutally occupying Iraq, imprisoning whole cities, like Falluja, and gunning down dark-skinned residents from tanks and helicopters.

Calls for a royal commission are indeed ***counterposed*** to the necessary proletarian-centred defence of Aboriginal people. Such calls *demobilise* struggle *against* the brutalities of the capitalist state by promoting illusions that the latter can be pressured to be more partisan towards Aboriginal people. Pleas for the state to set up an inquiry give authority and therefore added strength to the same force that would try and crush any struggle against racist repression and capitalist exploitation.

In a small way, the Police Association's diktat to Trades Hall to ban a leftist meeting in defence of Aborigines shows clearly why the cops have no place in the workers movement. Imagine trying to prepare a mass picket line or a union-centred action defending Aborigines when the very police force that is organised precisely for the purpose of violently attacking such struggles is part of the meeting where these campaigns are organised! We say: ***Cops, prison guards out of the unions!***

The VTHC leadership's embrace of the cops reflects their subservience to the capitalist state. Indeed, the union tops' program is to get their Labor Party parliamentary mates elected to government to administer the bourgeois state. A class-struggle leadership of the unions must be built in a political struggle against the Laborite misleaders. Such a leadership would be linked to a Leninist party that would lead the revolutionary fight to sweep away the entire racist capitalist system.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Shut Down the Campus! Boycott Classes!

Victory to Columbia Graduate Student Employees Strike!

APRIL 26—Hundreds of graduate students—instructors, research assistants and teaching assistants—organized by the Graduate Student Employees United/ United Auto Workers Local 2110 (GSEU) walked out on strike at Columbia on April 19 in the face of the campus administration's unyielding opposition to their

Young Spartacus

attempts to unionize. Last week, there were daily pickets at various university locations, including a day of picketing at the Health Sciences campus some 50 blocks north, where a significant minority of GSEU members work and study.

The Columbia Spartacus Youth Club has been actively participating in the strike, joining the picket lines and urging students to help the strike win. The strike has found considerable support. Instructors from Rutgers, Professional Staff Congress members from the City University of New York system and unionized TAs and adjunct faculty from New York University have helped man the picket lines. Graduate student unions fighting for recognition at other campuses, such as Yale and the University of Pennsylvania, are watching this strike closely. Members of other campus unions have individually expressed sympathy. Many students have shown their support for the strike, including at a walkout and rally on April 21 led by a Students for Economic and Environmental Justice-organized undergraduate support committee.

The administration, which runs the university in the service of the capitalist class (a class amply represented on its Board of Trustees), has made it clear that this is a battle between two irreconcilably opposed sides. Liberal provost Alan Brinkley stated baldly: "There's no middle ground between these positions [of the administration and the union]" (*Columbia Spectator*, 20 April). This administration is impervious to attempts to embarrass it, shame it or appeal to a sense of decency that it doesn't have. In addition to being a racist slumlord, Columbia has a long history of battling union organizing drives. The university refused to recognize Transport Workers Union Local 241 representing campus maintenance workers until a two-day strike in 1945, two years after the union was formed. In its fight against the GSEU, Columbia has hired the notorious Proskauer Rose law firm, which specializes in union-busting.

Young Spartacus

GSEU strike picket marches onto campus to join undergraduate walkout and support rally, April 21.

The campus must be ***shut down*** for the strike to win. The union leadership has yet to build picket lines for the explicit purpose of stopping all business on the campus. Despite the cancellation of many classes, labs and discussion sections taught by graduate students, others continue to meet under scab instructors, although some of these scabs have faced class walkouts by irate undergraduates. The union has taken the crucial step of seeking to stop deliveries to campus, albeit sporadically.

We have argued from the strike's beginning for all groups sympathetic to the GSEU to hold their meetings off campus. The GSEU is now taking this up. However, the undergraduate strike support group has met on campus during the strike. Although well-meaning, such "solidarity" meetings undermine the strike by using a struck facility when strike supporters should instead help shut the campus down.

The SYC has argued for a general boycott of classes and for all workers on campus to stop working. Due to their sheer numbers on campus, students have some social weight and can affect the outcome of this strike. A real show of student solidarity would significantly disrupt the "normal workings" of the university. Many have said they agree with our arguments; however, the union leadership rejects a strategy that could bring the administration to its knees. Some claim that a boycott is unrealistic and would lead to reprisals. If the ***union*** were to call a student boycott of classes and if campus workers and students respected the picket lines, it would provide students and workers supporting the strike some protection against academic penalties and reprisals.

In contrast to the SYC, much of the campus left has conducted themselves dreadfully in the strike. Some "radical" professors like History's Barbara Fields oppose the strike, while others like Eric Foner have declared themselves "neutral." Many strikers are rightfully furious with these academics, who effectively undermine the strike by continuing to hold classes and stating their intention to grade papers, who in short are *scabbing*. Foner and Fields have written eloquently about the struggles of black slaves against the racist Southern slavocracy during the Civil War. But when class struggle threatens to disrupt their comfortable, tenured careers, they tell a different tale. The record of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) is only fractionally better. Although they massed their forces for the April 21 student rally, they have more frequently been spotted hawking the *Socialist Worker* at literature tables ***behind*** the picket lines. At bottom, the ISO rejects the fight to mobilize the workers and their allies independently of the bosses, and honoring the picket line is not a matter of principle for them. The ISO only moved its meetings off the main campus after the union leadership explicitly asked them to.

We print below an April 21 New York SYC leaflet widely distributed on the picket lines.

* * *

Columbia University graduate students walked out on strike Monday, rightly fed up with more than two years of attempts by the administration to stop their unionization. Members of the campus Graduate Student Employees United (GSEU), which represents a majority of teaching and research assistants, overwhelmingly authorized the strike. Graduate students play an integral role at the university. TAs carry the burdens of teaching, conducting discussions and grading course papers; RAs typically perform experiments and help maintain labs. Other graduate students teach courses in the core curriculum, the Undergraduate Writing Program and many language classes. Yet these students receive only a pittance compared to what a tenure-track professor receives and can barely live off what they earn. On the first day of the strike, the Spartacus Youth Club joined five hundred striking students and their supporters on the picket lines, where popular chants were "If we're not workers, then we're not 'not working'!" and "Union, now!" Students from other area schools came out, including representatives of the graduate student union at New York University. We say: *Victory to the GSEU strike!*

Shutting down the university is crucial to winning this struggle. The SYC calls on all students, workers and faculty to mobilize in solidarity. We say that there should be a boycott of ***all*** classes, both on and off campus, and united action to build picket lines that nobody crosses. Students must forge an alliance with campus workers, from maintenance workers in TWU 241 to cafeteria workers in SEIU 1199, to extend the strike campus-wide as well as with UPS and postal service workers to stop deliveries. One small example of such labor solidarity was the sympathy strike by clerical workers in UAW 2110 during the GSEU one-day strike in 2002.

While there is significant support for the strike on campus, this support must be translated into an understanding of the elementary principle that *picket lines mean don't cross*. Picket lines are the fundamental battle lines of the class struggle. By withholding their labor power, striking workers can bring all activity at a location to a halt, whether at a campus or factory, but not without solid picket lines. It is on the picket line, not in the halls of

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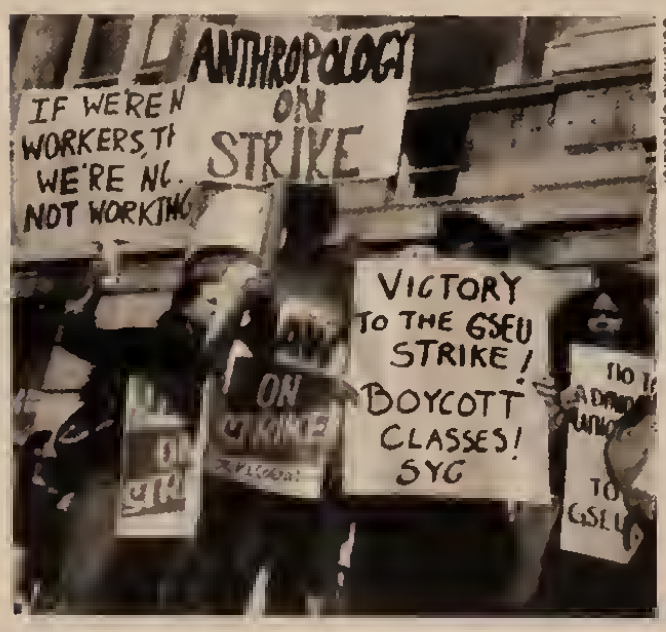

Columbia Spectator

GSEU members and supporters on first day of strike, April 19. SYC has walked picket lines, argued for shutting down campus as strategy to win.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 826 | 14 May 2004

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

U.S. Imperialism's Torture, Inc.

The grotesque photos flashed around the world from Abu Ghraib prison in U.S.-occupied Iraq have totally demolished the official Bush line that the U.S. went in to "liberate" Iraq and institute "democracy." This "liberation" is now identified with a young American woman soldier holding a groveling, naked Iraqi prisoner tethered to a leash like an animal. The photos only partially expose a small part of the terror and atrocities which in fact are meted out daily to U.S. imperialism's victims worldwide, as well as inside the U.S. itself. From the prison camp in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba to the death rows of Texas; from systematic mass murder and torture of Vietnamese liberation fighters in the CIA's "Operation Phoenix" program in Vietnam to the death squads in Latin America; from Britain's Long Kesh prison to the basements of French colonial Algiers; from Chile's Santiago Stadium to Israel's Ashkelon: an awful network of torture and death, going back in time, spans the world. These are not "aberrations." They are the conscious policies of imperialist and neocolonialist ruling regimes, who routinely and necessarily use terror and degradation as tools to maintain their power.

Saman/Newsday

Relatives of Iraqi prisoners protest outside Abu Ghraib prison, May 5, demanding "Occupiers leave our country!" Below: U.S. troops routinely round up and brutalize population in Iraq.

AP

The Democratic Party is trying to exploit widespread revulsion at the newly exposed sexual abuse and torture by American troops and mercenaries in Iraq to fuel their campaign to take over the White House from Bush. In reality, the crimes and destruction for which U.S. imperialism is known worldwide were chiefly carried out under Democratic Party administrations: the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the reduction of North Korea to rubble in a war carried out under United Nations aegis in the early 1950s; the napalming and systematic devastation of Vietnam; the terror bombing of Serbia under Clinton in 1999.

In the Iraq war, the International Communist League forthrightly took a side for the military defense of Iraq, without giving any political support to Saddam Hussein, against U.S. imperialism. Under the brutal U.S. military occupation today, every blow against the U.S. and its dwindling "coalition of the willing" is objectively in the interests of workers worldwide. At the same time, we steadfastly oppose the communalist violence carried out by clerical reactionaries and remnants of the Ba'athist regime. The crucial force that must be mobilized politically to strike a blow against the U.S. occupation of Iraq is the multiracial proletariat at home. U.S. out of Iraq!

No people ever subjugated by an imperialist army, and certainly no black person in America, could have been surprised by the widespread debasement of prisoners by American forces in Iraq. It's no accident the killers and sadists of Abu Ghraib include former U.S. cops and prison guards, domestic enforcers of U.S. state terror against poor, black and working people and immigrants. Reports from Abu Ghraib specify that one prisoner was raped and sodomized with a broomstick—exactly like Haitian immigrant Abner Louima was in a New York City police station in 1997. One of the torturers at Abu Ghraib, Specialist Charles Graner Jr., is a guard at Pennsylvania's notorious SCI Greene prison where America's foremost black political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, is held on death row. That prison was the scene of a 1998 abuse scandal over guards beating and sadistically humiliating prisoners. In a 3 May column, Mumia writes: "The horrific treatment of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib has its dark precedents in the prisons and police stations across America."

The American imperialist state, already a prison house for blacks, in the name of its "war on terror" has exported and vastly expanded its own arsenal of terror, now employed on a world scale without even the hypocritical pretense of "legality." Anthony Lewis, a liberal who believes that the U.S. should act in accordance with its purported commitment to the rule of law, wrote: "President Bush has made clear his view that law must bend to what he regards as necessity. National security trumps our commitments to international law. The Constitution must yield to novel infringements on American freedom." On the other end of the spectrum is the rabid apologist for Zionist terror, Alan Dershowitz: "[We could use] a torture warrant.... I would talk about a nonlethal torture, say, a sterilized needle underneath the nail, which would violate the Geneva Accords, but you know, countries all over the world violate the Geneva Accords" (CNN, 4 March 2003). Warrant or not, Maj. Gen. Miller, chief of detention first in Guantánamo and now in Iraq, testified that "special interrogation techniques...must be approved," i.e., torture is permissible.

As the scandal exploded, Bush's Secretary of State Colin Powell, overseer of the 1991 mass slaughter of fleeing Iraqi troops on the "highway of death" in the first Gulf War, compared the prison abuse to the 1968 My Lai massacre in Vietnam in an interview on CNN, as just one of those deplorable things that happen in war. It's obscene that this mass murderer is allowed to weep public crocodile tears for the hundreds of Vietnamese men, women and children slaughtered—after mass rape, sodomy, torture and maiming—by U.S. troops in the village of My Lai. In My Lai, the American ruling class pinned the blame on low-level "rogue" soldiers and amnestied the most senior officers involved. General Koster, the division commander in overall charge of the troops in My Lai, watched the entire massacre from the air and radioed orders to Lieutenant Calley in the village. Calley was merely as high up the chain of command as the American government was willing to go.

A major goal of the Bush administration in invading and occupying Iraq was to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome."

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The Civil Rights Movement

A Marxist Analysis

SEE PAGE 4

South Africa: Protest ANC Government Crackdown on Leftists and Landless Peoples Movement!

JOHANNESBURG—The African National Congress (ANC) capitalist regime is hysterically celebrating ten years of democracy and freedom and has inaugurated a president. Behind the democratic facade is the closed fist of repression targeting leftist opponents of ANC privatisation and a social movement fighting for land for the millions of landless in neo-apartheid South Africa. With the ANC falsely claiming a mandate after the recent election (with only 32 percent of the electorate voting!) and President Thabo Mbeki having enlisted in George Bush's "war on terror," this state persecution is ominous and *ultimately aimed at the working class as a whole*. It must be protested both within South Africa and internationally. *An injury to one is an injury to all!*

On Human Rights Day, 21 March, the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) sought to protest outside the dedication ecremony of the new Constitutional Court building where Mbeki was to speak. Members of the APF were arrested *not* at the Constitutional Court hut at various gathering sites and taxi ranks around Gauteng Province including Soweto, Hillbrow and Pretoria. Their "crime" was their intent to express their opposition to prepaid water meters. utility cutoffs and privatisation polieies of the ANC. Increasingly, in the "new" South Africa, constitutional rights stand for nothing when you challenge the capitalist status quo. Some 52 APF memhers were identified and arrested because they were wearing the distinctive red APF shirts. They were held for four hours and released after paying a fine. They faced a court date on May 5, where the state dropped the charges. A number of hystanders were arrested simply for wearing red and being in the vicinity of departure points. Bail conditions have been designed to restrict the freedom of movement of APF organisers. There is also a high court interdict restricting members of the APF from coming within 50 meters of the Johannesburg Waterworks in Soweto.

The members of the APF were detained and denied their rights beeause of the slanderous and dangerous accusation regarding a protest at Johanneshurg mayor Amos Masondo's house in 2002. Then, the mayor's security guards wantonly and without provocation fired on an unarmed crowd protesting water and electricity cutoffs in Soweto. Despite the protesters being hounded by the courts for almost a year, *no* charges were made to stick, which exposes the baseless violence-baiting pretext of the state. Masondo and the ANC are making it maximally difficult for the APF to organise protest within Johannesburg.

On April 14, election day, some 60 members of the Landless Peoples Movement (LPM) were prevented from entering Johannesburg where they were to press their call for a boycott ("no land no vote") of the elections. They were kept in holding cells for a night and had to pay R300 bail after being charged with contravening election laws. An LPM spokesman said some members were "subjected to interrogation, harassment and physical violence" while in detention. The LPM's threat to occupy white-owned farms has caused a great deal of distress in the ANC and in South Africa generally, where the spectre of Mugabe's land seizures in Zimbahwe is an all-purpose hogeyman. The Freedom of Expression Institute, an organisation that monitors attacks on civil liberties, has said that the APF and LPM are "effectively banned organisations in Johannesburg."

Especially since the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, where hoth groups protested against ANC policies, they have heen suhject to intensified scrutiny and provocation by the National Intelligence Service (NIS). It is illusory and dangerous to rely on the constitution or on the so-called "progressive" credentials of the hourgeois-nationalist ANC. There is a yawning chasm hetween the constitutional pretensions of the ANC and the ugly reality on the ground.

Validating the "liberation" claims of the government is the South African Communist Party/Congress of South African Trade Unions (SACP/COSATU) in their Tripartite Alliance with the ANC. The powerful unions in this country have the power to stop state repression when not chained to the ANC through the class collaboration of SACP/COSATU. While with the assistance of SACP/COSATU the ANC parades as a liberation movement in power, they are in fact black front men for the capitalist class, which remains, as it was under the old apartheid system, overwhelmingly white. And they have proved time and again their willingness to use the apparatus and instruments of repression against the working class, the left and militant students. In late April, Wits (University of Witwatersrand) students hrought the eampus to a standstill to protest the eutting of financial aid packages to needy students by *50 per cent*. The university administration called the cops, and 12 students were arrested and face charges of "public violence" under the 1993 Gathering Act. the same law used against the APF. Drop the charges against Wits student protesters! The courts. cops and laws are the means by which the ANC insures the supremacy of the Randlords and neo-apartheid capitalist rule. *Down with the Tripartite Alliance! Mobilise working class power to defend the right to assemble and organise! Down with the ANC's anti-terror legislation!*

The APF reflects a vaeillating posture toward the ANC. Common to leftist elements and groups within the APF is a shared history of class collaboration with the ANC at one stage or another. APF leader Trevor Ngawane is himself an expelled ANC councilor. The Cliffite Keep Left! yet again called for a vote for the capitalist ANC in the recent elections. The Taaffeite Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM) spent 20 years inside the ANC hefore it "discovered" it was a capitalist party in 1996. While some APF spokesmen called for a boycott of the elections, during early Iraq antiwar protests, the APF shared a platform with ANC bigwigs, thereby legitimising the antiwar pretensions of the capitalist ANC. The APF and their constituent groups function as left tails of bourgeois nationalism and see their role as heing that of left pressure on the ANC-led nationalist popular front for structural adjustments within the confines of capitalism.

Spartacist South Africa's opposition to the ANC is principled and unstinting. The only way to end the incessant attacks on the working class and impoverished, to provide jobs for all and land to the landless is through socialist revolution in South Africa led hy the powerful South African working class in struggle against the ANC, which since 1994 has been the primary political agent of the white capitalist class, and all those who push illusions in it. Such a revolutionary struggle requires the building of a Trotskyist vanguard party, which will he a tribune of the people. We are dedicated to this task. Despite our political differences with the APF and LPM, we call on all opponents of capitalist state repression, the left and labour to defend victimised militants.

Drop all the charges! Stop the persecution of APF and LPM! Defend the left and workers movement! ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution

In 1953, when legally enforced segregation was still the rule in the South, American Trotskyist Richard S. Fraser gave two lectures explaining the unique role of racist oppression in underpinning the entire course of the development of American capitalism. He put forward the perspective of revolutionary integrationism—the fight for full political and social equality of black people in American society necessarily tied to the struggle for an egalitarian socialist society. He counterposed this revolutionary program both to bourgeois liberals, and also to those in the Stalinist Communist Party and within his own then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party who argued that American black people were a separate nation. The Spartacist League carries forward Fraser's pioneering work and lifelong struggle for a third American revolution.

The racial division of society was horn with capitalism and will die only with the death of this last system of exploitation. Before capitalism there was no race concept. There was no skin color exploitation, there was no race prejudice, there was no idea of superiority and inferiority based upon physical characteristics.

It was the advent of Negro chattel slavery in the western hemisphere which first divided society into races. In a measure the whole supremacy of western capitalism is founded upon this modern chattel slavery. The primary accumulation of capital which was the foundation of the industrial revolution was accrued largely from the slave trade.

The products of the slave system in the early colonies formed the backhone of European mercantilism and the raw materials for industrial capitalism. The three-cornered trade hy pious New England merchants, consisting of rum, slaves and sugar cane, was the foundation of American commerce. Thus Negro slavery was the pivotal point upon which the foundations of the U.S. national economy were hinged....

But capitalism, even in the southern United States, has created the conditions necessary for its own destruction. It has disrupted the old agrarian pattern, undermined the privileged white middle class, thus weakening the whole fahric of social repression. It has created great industries, proletarianizing white, urhanizing black. This process has centralized the Negro community in positions of great strategic advantage in large city communities, whereas hefore they were dispersed over the countryside. Capitalism has likewise created the conditions for the overthrow of race prejudice hy working class solidarity.

It falls upon the shoulders of the proletarian revolution, in which the American workers will join together with the Negro people in the abolition of capitalism, to uproot the Jim Crow system. It is onr task to build the party to lead that revolution: the Socialist Workers Party.

—R.S. Fraser, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution," in "In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3 (1990)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD: Rosemary Palenque (managing editor), Bruce Andre, Ray Bishop, Jon Brule, Karen Cole, Paul Cone, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Walter Jennings, Jane Kerrigan, Len Meyers, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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The closing date for news in this issue is 11 May.

No. 826 **14 May 2004**

Indymedia

August 2002: Landless Peoples Movement protest at World Summit conference in Johannesburg.

Young Spartacus

Columbia Graduate Students Battle Union-Busting Administration

NEW YORK, May 9—Striking against the arrogant, union-busting campus administration for union recognition, the graduate students who work as teaching assistants, research assistants and instructors at Columbia University have been out for three weeks. Comrades from the SYC have walked the picket lines of the Graduate Student Employees United/United Auto Workers Local 2110 (GSEU/UAW), attended strike rallies and urged students to take the side of the graduate student workers.

As a result of the strike, numerous classes and discussion and lab sections have not met. Still, as the university moves into finals, the majority of classes are continuing. The campus should be shut down! No papers should be graded; no classes should meet for finals; workers should refuse to work.

Young Spartacus

May 6 GSEU strike rally, joined by clerical staff on sympathy strike, other campus workers, student supporters and SYC, outside Columbia administration building.

Shut Down the University! No Reprisals!

The clerical workers in UAW Local 2110 went out on a one-day sympathy strike on May 6. The picket lines swelled with the crucial addition of the support staff. The GSEU also secured the assurance of the Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 241 leadership that its members would honor the picket lines on that day. But the Local 241 leadership did not inform its membership, who largely crossed the early morning picket lines that the GSEU set up. However, many maintenance workers and groundskeepers of TWU Local 241 were clearly not happy with doing so, and came out to the strike rally at noon.

This sympathy strike is a small example of what the SYC means when we call for extending the GSEU strike. It shows there is broad campus support for the graduate students. SYCers on the picket line and an SYC supporter in the GSEU have argued that strikes are won by bringing the social power of labor and its allies to bear against the bosses. At rallies and on the picket lines, our comrades have raised signs calling for shutting down the campus and making the elementary point: "Picket Lines Mean Don't Cross!" As an SYC leaflet widely distributed to striking students and their supporters (reprinted in *WV* No. 825, 30 April) argues:

> "We say that there should be a boycott of *all* classes, both on and off campus, and united action to build picket lines that nobody crosses. Students must forge an alliance with campus workers, from maintenance workers in TWU 241 to cafeteria workers in SEIU 1199, to extend the strike campus-wide as well as with UPS and postal service workers to stop deliveries."

While students do not, as such, wield much social power in society as a whole, they have a crucial leverage in campus strikes due to their numbers on campus coupled with their obvious importance to the university. As the *Columbia Spectator* noted on April 28, "Columbia recognizes that undergraduates play a major role in the success of the strike. The University has a problem if graduate students won't teach, and an even bigger problem if students won't go to class." Public school teachers unions have long recognized this and when on strike frequently ask parents and students to boycott classes and participate in picket lines.

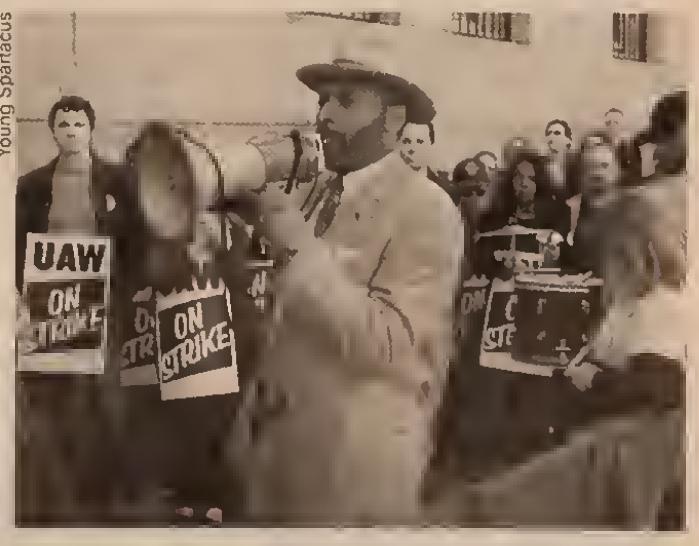
This sympathy strike cuts against the grain of the overall strategy of the GSEU leadership, which is to appeal to the good graces of the administration rather than mobilize the potential allies of the graduate students. AFL-CIO president John Sweeney spoke to a strike rally on April 28, imploring Columbia to "rise above the petty, vicious concerns of higher education" and "join [the union] in a stand for higher principles." UAW Local 2110 president Maida Rosenstein followed him with a speech praising the Democratic Party politicians who were the majority of the speakers at the rally, while Sonny Hall of the TWU stood nearby, prominently sporting a "John Kerry for President" button.

The trade-union bureaucracy has pursued a policy of what they call the "porous picket line." This policy does not treat picket lines as the battle lines of class struggle, but rather as a publicity campaign, a point of moral pressure aimed at shaming and annoying the administration into submission. The union leadership justifies this strategy with the stated fear of raising any demands that might turn those faculty and students who are currently lukewarm in their support of the GSEU against the strike. In practice, this has meant that the union has made virtually no demands for concrete solidarity from sympathetic professors and students. At most, professors have been asked to move classes off campus, which does little but save Columbia on electricity. Indeed, GSEU has indicated that it thinks students should continue to attend classes, professors should continue to teach, and support staff should continue to work.

The union leadership's wooing of and stated reliance on Democratic Party politicians is integrally linked to the "porous picket line" strategy. The union leadership works overtime to line up these Democrats to speak to their rallies in the hopes that they will put pressure on the administration. The Democratic Party is a party of capital as much as the Republicans, and it is therefore squarely against militant class struggle and workers' victories. The Democrats, on all levels of government, have a long and sordid history of containing, co-opting and repressing labor struggle. Examples abound, from New York State attorney general Eliot Spitzer issuing anti-union injunctions against New York City transit workers in 1999 to Democratic Party politicians aiding the AFL-CIO bureaucracy's sellout of striking transit and grocery workers in California earlier this year. Everything that the labor movement has ever won has come through hard struggle, not through the good graces of capitalist politicians and the bosses.

The result of the GSEU leadership's strategy is clear if one peers through the gate down College Walk. Students scurry as usual to the library; campus groundskeepers and maintenance workers walk or drive by; clerical staff emerge around noon for their lunch breaks; professors head to their offices, classes and review sessions—and those teaching off campus differ only in the length of their walk. With the union's blessing, even those sympathetic to the strike are largely engaging in strikebreaking activity by keeping the university running. The union leadership even advised one campus worker who has been honoring the strike to go back to work.

The "liberal" administration has not budged from its initial position of refusing to recognize a graduate student union. One should not be surprised at this. The fight for union rights is a fight *against* the administration. One clerical worker in UAW Local 2110 told SYCers on the picket line that, if not for the union, she probably never would have gotten a raise in her 15 years on the job. Further, the ruling class has a significant interest in what goes on at Columbia, which performs many services for the capitalists. Columbia is an elite institution with a nearly *$4.3 billion* endowment, sky-high tuition and a layout that physically resembles a fortress "guarding" the students and the relatively affluent Morningside Heights neighborhood from surrounding Harlem. Wall Street and corporate law firms are chock full of Columbia graduates. In 2003, the U.S. government gave Columbia $13 million for weapons research alone.



Young Spartacus

Democratic Party city councilman Bill Perkins addressing GSEU picket. Union leadership's faith in capitalist politicians is obstacle to mobilizing power of labor and its allies.

As the *Columbia Spectator* aptly noted in a 3 May editorial, Columbia is collaborating with the anti-immigrant

continued on page 7

No Reliance on the Democratic Party!

The Civil Rights Movement
A Marxist Analysis

We print below the presentation given by comrade Paula Daniels at a Spartacist League forum in New York City on February 21, slightly edited for publication.

On the same weekend in mid April 1960, two youth groups held their founding conferences. In Philadelphia, the YSA (Young Socialist Alliance) was founded on a program of revolutionary Marxism: Trotskyism. However, its parent group, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), was quickly degenerating into reformism. In Raleigh, North Carolina, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was coalescing under the auspices of Martin Luther King's group, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). SNCC was a heterogeneous group of Southern black college students motivated by the blossoming student sit-in movement against segregation. Political ferment was brewing in America and youth would be springing into action around the country. Behind the story of these two politically different groups was the promise of future intersection of black and red, revealing the revolutionary potential of the burgeoning civil rights movement.

Schapiro/Black Star

Young civil rights activists in Ohio before departing for Mississippi as part of SNCC's 1964 "Freedom Summer" project.

The civil rights movement shook this country to its core and like any deep-rooted social struggle, it didn't just fall from the sky. There has to be a whole lot of social kindling piling up to set a whole country on fire. This was a mass, trans-class movement. An entire generation of youth, black and white, was politicized. A whole layer of youth was breaking beyond the bounds of capitalism as they groped for answers. In the South, hundreds of thousands of black people were mobilized, confronting the totalitarian, racist police state that they had lived under for three-quarters of a century since the defeat of Radical Reconstruction, the brief period after the Civil War when the promise of fully integrating blacks into American society existed. When Reconstruction was smashed with the Compromise of 1877 and the Union Army withdrew from the South, Jim Crow, the brutal system of strict racial separation, codified in law and enforced by a reign of terror, took hold. Despite having the formal right to vote, black people were kept from exercising that right by bogus literacy tests with impossible questions like "how many bubbles on a bar of soap?"; by the poll tax; and through violence and intimidation—including murder.

The American South at the time of the civil rights movement was a real anomaly. You had a region in the most advanced capitalist country in the world that was not run like a bourgeois democracy. Jim Crow's political and legal superstructure was much more akin to the South African apartheid system. Many blacks worked the same land as their slave forebears. A big difference was that some were employed in industry—particularly steel and longshore. So why was such a repressive apparatus needed? Why did it take a life and death fight to gain simple recognition of democratic rights for some 13 million American citizens?

The answer goes straight to the heart of what we Marxists call the black question. No single question has politically and socially shaped this country more than that of black oppression. The decision to supply the slave labor force with men, women and children kidnapped from the African continent and thereafter branded by their skin color is something that impacts on the very essence of American society today. Since their arrival, blacks have been an integral part of the economy, while forcibly kept at the bottom rungs of society. As such, black people in America are a race-color caste, doubly oppressed as workers and blacks, and triply oppressed in the case of black women. Any revolutionary organization worth its salt must take on the question of the special oppression of black people. It is as fundamental to U.S. capitalism as the exploitation of labor and the inherent drive for war.

Racism is a crucial tool used by the U.S. ruling class to keep the working class divided, creating an enormous obstacle to united struggle against the common class enemy—the bourgeoisie. Racism provides a scapegoat for the ills of capitalism, and, crucially, a reserve army of labor to be employed or shoved aside depending upon the system's need. That is what we mean when we talk about a material basis for black oppression. Black oppression is not just a question of racist ideas, and that's why liberal integration, the notion of fully incorporating blacks into a capitalist society, will never achieve racial equality.

Black oppression cannot be rooted out short of smashing the capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society—that is the core of our program for *revolutionary integrationism*. This unique perspective is based on the pioneering work of Richard Fraser, to whom we owe a great deal, most notably for his 1955 document (written while he was in the SWP), "For the Materialist Conception of the Negro Question."

Precisely because blacks constitute the most exploited layer of the working class, which is the only force, because of its social organization and power to stop production, capable of shattering the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the black question is a strategic question in the fight for proletarian revolution in this country. The workplace is one of the few integrated places in the U.S. Because of their position as the most oppressed, often the most experienced and conscious section of the working class, revolutionary black workers will play an exceptional role as a key component of an integrated revolutionary party.

Black Freedom Struggle Smashes Cold War Consensus

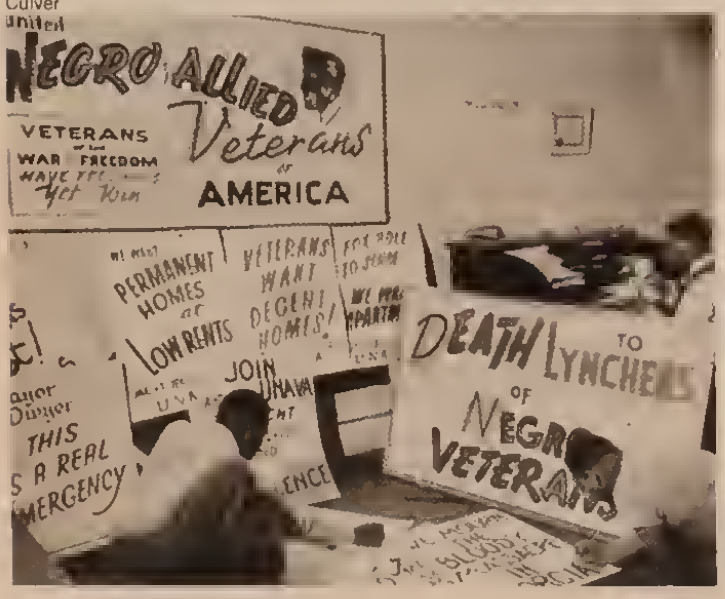
The story of the civil rights movement is not just about tearing down Jim Crow, which is no small thing, to be sure. It's about the failure of liberal integration, and it is a vindication, albeit in the negative, of our program of revolutionary integrationism. The black masses demonstrating in the streets, those for whom the American Dream was more of a nightmare, crashed through the ideological conformity of the Cold War McCarthyite period, sharpening the contradictions of capitalist society and exposing the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

To understand what triggered the intense social struggles of the 1950s and 1960s you have to look back to the previous two decades, during which both American politics and black life were transformed by the social and class struggles of the 1930s and 1940s. You have to look at the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1936-1937; and the role played by the Communist Party (CP) in union and black struggles. Despite their formal (and incorrect) position that black people constituted a separate nation in the U.S., the CP carried out some very fine and courageous work on the question of black rights and integration. From CIO union organizing drives and campaigns on behalf of the unemployed, to their work with brutally oppressed sharecroppers in the South and the international campaign to free the Scottsboro Boys—nine black youths framed up on charges of raping Southern white women—the CP gained a foothold in black communities. (The Scottsboro case was initially shunned by the NAACP, earning them the nickname "National Association for the Advancement of Certain People.")

At the same time, black workers were joining the industrial workforce in droves and migrating to the North as the manpower need created by two world wars and immigration restrictions provided job opportunities and the possibility to escape the lynch rope in the South. The CIO not only organized integrated, industrial unions (with varying degrees of success) but, often led by socialists and including many black organizers, intervened in the social struggles of the day, fighting for integration, voter registration and against lynching. For the first time, blacks were integrated into unions alongside white workers on a large scale.

The urbanization, industrialization, increased education and political consciousness of black Americans would have profound implications as the U.S. entered World War II. The black population that was drafted into the Jim Crow military to defend "freedom and democracy" in the early 1940s was not of the same cloth as those drafted during World War I. While most American blacks supported the war, there were strong reservations. As one black man put it: "I was really ashamed of myself the day Pearl Harbor was hit. When I heard the news I jumped up and laughed. 'Well sir,' I said.

Culver



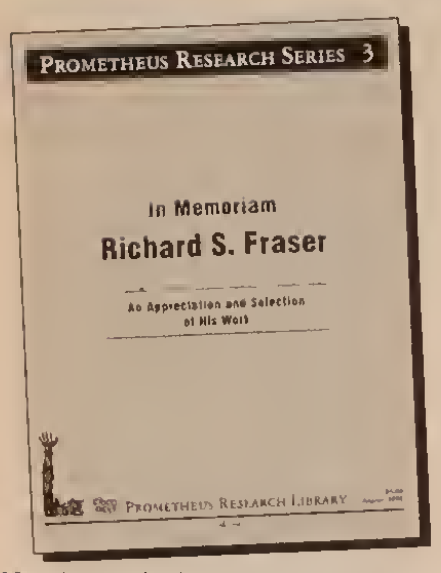
Elliot Erwitt

1948: Black World War II vets return to fight for their rights at home (left). Segregated drinking fountains in North Carolina, 1950.

"I don't guess the white folks will say colored people can't fly airplanes from now on. They sure slammed the hell outa Pearl Harbor'."

The "Double V" campaign was heralded in black communities across the country. It stood for "victory against the Axis Forces abroad, victory against discrimination at home." The problem, of course, with this campaign was that it was premised on patriotic support to the war, taking a side with the American imperialists. Revolutionary Trotskyists took no side in this interimperialist slaughter, except, crucially, for unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state. The Stalinized American Communist Party, in contrast, threw their support to President Roosevelt and the war effort, which meant breaking strikes and betraying the black equality struggle in pursuit of patriotic unity with the capitalist rulers in the war.

Though contradictory, the "Double V" campaign did signal a growing sentiment to fight for black rights at home, and civil rights became central to American politics for the first time since Reconstruction. One thing that forced the bourgeoisie to take notice was the fact that racial tensions threatened to impede the war effort. In 1943, from March to May alone, racist strikes against upgrading the positions of black workers resulted in the loss of nearly 2.5 million man-hours of war production. By the war's end, I think it's safe to say that the racial status quo had been qualitatively altered. Over a million black troops served in the military and millions more worked in defense jobs, gaining crucial skills and union membership. They had "served their country" and thought they were entitled to a better life.



Marxist analysis of black oppression by veteran American Trotskyist Richard Fraser. Available for $7 (includes postage). Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

But far from coming home to jobs and better conditions, the black troops came home to ghettos in the North and a racist police state in the South. All troops, black and white, came home to depression-level wages, inflation and layoffs which triggered the biggest strike wave this country has ever seen. As the '40s drew to a close, blacks were first to be fired, Rosie the Riveter was back in her apron, and the Russian question was foremost in

Danny Lyon

SNCC militant Willie Ricks (center) addresses rally in Atlanta, Georgia, in early 1960s.

American politics with the onset of the Cold War. The anti-Communist witchhunts purged the unions of reds and leftists, and installed a generation of labor leaders who cut their teeth on driving out these radicals. These unions would no longer go out and fight for broader issues or challenge the powers that be.

The existence of the Soviet workers state played no small part in the U.S. bourgeoisie's growing anxiety over Jim Crow. The glaring discrimination and disenfranchisement of blacks had become an international embarrassment to those proclaiming to be the leaders of the "free world." The escalating civil rights movement and the brutal attacks on blacks fighting for basic democratic rights were a daily staple in the international press and were featured prominently and frequently in the Soviet press. This posed a real problem, with the U.S. posturing as the protector of "freedom" as it jockeyed for the allegiance of the non-aligned countries. In May 1946, acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote:

> "While sometimes these pronouncements are exaggerated and unjustified, they all too frequently point with accuracy to some form of discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin. Frequently we find it next to impossible to formulate a satisfactory answer to our critics in other countries...the existence of discrimination against minority groups in the United States is a handicap in our relations with other countries."

When President Truman was forced to adopt a mild civil rights plank in his 1948 re-election campaign, the Dixiecrats, led by Strom Thurmond, broke away in reaction to this and formed the States Rights Party. (You get a very clear picture of what Trent Lott really meant when he recently longed for "what might have been" had Thurmond won the election in '48.) When the Cold War became a hot war in Korea, massive casualties and the need for fresh troops provided the impetus to finally carry out the 1948 order to desegregate the armed forces. Upon returning home, black veterans with military training and industrial skills were damned if they were going to accept the same old racist crap and Jim Crow humiliation and terror. It was this proletarian core that composed the ranks of the early civil rights movement.

Federal Troops Serve the Bosses' Interest

The historic Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was announced on May 17, 1954. With the striking down of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* "separate but equal" decision of 1896, the door was opened to integrate public schools. The reaction among the Southern segregationists was as violent as it was swift. May 17 was dubbed "Black Monday": Klan membership reached its highest levels in many years; White Citizens Councils were formed and a campaign of organized terror was unleashed to keep blacks "in their place." When I say organized terror, I am talking about from the highest-ranking Southern officials on down.

The South was politically dominated and ruled by the Democrats, *the* party of racial segregation since the Civil War. Your local sheriff or mayor was likely to belong to the Democratic Party as well as the virulently racist White Citizens Council or the Klan. Over the last 30 years the Democratic Party has developed a facade of an ally to blacks and labor, but what it actually is, is the historic party of war and racism, no less committed to maintaining a brutally racist, capitalist system than the Republicans.

In 1957, when the court ordered the desegregation of Little Rock, Arkansas' Central High School, Governor Orval Faubus (a Democrat) called out the state's National Guard to block these black school kids. Once again, all eyes were riveted on the South. In the USSR *Pravda* stated, "The reports and pictures from Little Rock show graphically that [Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles' precious morals are in fact bespattered with innocent blood."

The SWP was already abandoning its revolutionary program. It called for federal troops to intervene in the South to protect the black students, a flat-out appeal for reliance on the state in the face of growing resistance by blacks. Throughout the worst violence perpetrated against civil rights protesters, the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations sat on their hands and did nothing until blacks fought back! *That's* when the troops rolled in—to smash black self-defense! The question was posed: rely on the government or fight for a proletarian-centered struggle of the black masses. Against illusions in federal intervention, a revolutionary party would have fought for organized self-defense of the civil rights movement in Southern cities and to link the struggle to the power of labor, North and South. The state is not neutral. It exists to militarily defend the rule of the capitalist class and consists of "armed bodies of men"—cops, courts, prisons and the army. Reliance on the government is not only ineffective—it's dangerous!

By the mid 1950s, the tensions and frustrations of the American black population were coming to a full boil. The brutal lynching in the South of black Chicago teenager Emmett Till allegedly for whistling at a white woman in the summer of 1955 gained international attention and underscored the terror under which blacks lived. Only a few months later, Rosa Parks got "tired of being pushed around" and refused to give up her seat on that bus in Montgomery, Alabama. The Montgomery bus boycott campaign set off a movement that would polarize American society for more than a decade. It took a full year of enormous personal sacrifice and hardship on the part of black, working-class Montgomery, but by the following December Montgomery buses were integrated. And once again, the Southern racists embarked on an escalated campaign of terror.

The Dead End of Democratic Party Liberalism

It was at this time that a 26-year-old preacher, Martin Luther King Jr., entered the scene. The civil rights movement was dominated by a black middle-class, pacifist leadership tied to the Democratic Party with the sole aim of pressuring the Democratic Party administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson to grant formal legal equality to blacks in the South. King became the spokesman for reliance on the federal government, preaching Gandhian passive resistance. He peddled the lie that through peaceful, pressure politics all things are possible. When things got hot, he rushed in to cool things out, quell the militancy and contain the struggle—this is the same role that Jesse Jackson Sr. and Al Sharpton play today. This layer was, and still is, crucial in keeping the masses in check, leaving black struggles tactically and politically disarmed.

There's an absurd lie pushed by left groups like the International Socialist Organization and Socialist Action, among others, that toward the end of his life King was moving toward socialism or radical politics. King's growing opposition to the Vietnam War was in line with the growing layer of the bourgeoisie that began to express concern about the mounting American losses. (This is John Kerry's concern in Iraq today.) King's main criticism was that the U.S. was spending money overseas and not at home where it "was needed." In fact, he viewed the civil rights movement as "an issue which may well determine the destiny of our nation in its ideological struggle with communism." (Hardly a leftist statement!)

The postwar economic changes and the GI bill meant that for the first time there was a wide layer of black youth attending colleges in the South. They were inspired by the success of the Montgomery bus boycott. Sit-ins and protests at segregated facilities began popping up. The one that ignited youth around the country began on Monday, February 1, 1960 in Greensboro, North Carolina, when four black college students from North Carolina A&T College sat down at a segregated

continued on page 8

AP

Official black leaders like Martin Luther King (left) contained militant struggle for black rights in service of Kennedy White House.

AP

Malcolm X, one of America's great truth-tellers, called 1963 march the "Farce on Washington."

French Elections:

Trotskyists Give Critical Support to Gauche Révolutionnaire

The French regional and local elections of March 28 were a major setback for conservative president Jacques Chirac. In a clear plebiscite against the government's racist, anti-working-class policies, all regions of the country except Alsace and Corsica were won by coalitions led by the opposition Socialist Party. The electoral defeat came despite attempts by Chirac and his interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, to restore "national unity" by whipping up "anti-terrorist" hysteria. In the wake of the terrorist bombings in Madrid, they ratcheted up Vigipirate, a campaign of racist cop terror against dark-skinned workers and deportation of undocumented immigrants, to a higher level than even in the period following September 11. But it didn't work.

Two years ago, neo-Gaullist Chirac was elected president with the support not only of the right-wing parties but also the Socialist Party (PS), the Communist Party (PCF) and even Alain Krivine's Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR). They lined up behind Chirac, supposedly to prevent the election of the other second-round candidate, the fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen. Subsequently, these same organizations signed a call for a demonstration on 14 December 2002 against the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which promoted unity with Chirac against George Bush by declaring: "The French authorities and the parliament must use all available means to prevent a war against Iraq." The Chirac government was strengthened by such political support as it waged a campaign to slash retirement benefits for public employees.

Last October, the LCR and Lutte Ouvrière (LO), another group falsely claiming to be Trotskyist, spearheaded the expulsion from high school of Alma and Lila Lévy for wearing the Islamic headscarf. This helped pave the way for Chirac's racist law banning young women in headscarves from the schools. On March 6, two weeks before the first round of the local and regional elections, LO spokeswoman Arlette Laguiller demonstrated in Paris "against the headscarf at school" side by side with Socialist Party bigwig Jack Lang and Corinne Lepage, the head of Chirac's electoral slate in Paris. The Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), section of the International Communist League, has forthrightly opposed the headscarf as a symbol of the oppression of women while campaigning against the racist expulsions which fuel racial divisions in the working class.

Behind the electoral defeat of the Chirac government lies the danger of a new class-collaborationist alliance between the PS, the PCF and bourgeois forces like the Greens and the ultra-nationalists led by Jean-Pierre Chevènement. The goal of such a popular-front alliance would be to set up a capitalist government like the one in power from 1997 to 2002 under Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin, whose anti-immigrant and anti-working-class attacks prepared the way for the current right-wing government.

Le Bolchévik

LTF in February 14 demonstration against Chirac's racist law banning young women wearing the Islamic headscarf from school.

In the recent local elections, the LTF gave critical support to the Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR—Revolutionary Left), the French affiliate of Peter Taaffe's Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), which presented a candidate in the Rouen 5th canton [municipal district]. The GR took a clear position against the racist headscarf campaign and drew a crude class line by running against the out-of-power popular front and independently of the LCR and LO. The LTF offered to distribute the GR's electoral leaflet and to give them a financial contribution of 50 euros, but the GR leadership rejected both proposals. So the LTF in Rouen distributed hundreds of our own campaign leaflets at the local university campus and at a March 20 demonstration on the eve of the elections. We are gratified that the GR obtained a respectable 184 votes, 4 percent of the votes cast.

The GR in France adopts a profile which is to the left of most of their sister organizations in the CWI. With a former member of the LTF in its leadership and based in Rouen, a city where the LTF is well known, the GR is constrained to occupy a slot between the Trotskyism of the LTF and the crass opportunism of the LCR and LO. Thus, while a hallmark of the Taaffeites internationally is their position that cops are "workers in uniform," the GR was the only group in France, besides the LTF, that did not support the police "strike" (more accurately, riots) in November 2001 against the Guigou law introducing the legal presumption of innocence. At their recent day school in Rouen, it was a cadre of their Belgian group who defended the Taaffeite line on the police, much to the dismay of their younger members and to the embarrassment of their French cadre, who sat in stony silence. Challenged on the Taaffeites' refusal to call for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, the response was...further silence.

Seeking to capitalize on the fact that the PS and PCF are today so discredited, the GR prates about the need for "a new workers party," but what they are talking about is explicitly *not* a revolutionary party. GR members never fail in private discussions to label the LCR and LO as "reformists," but GR sees these same parties as central to its new "workers party." While standing independently in the local elections, GR ran in the regional elections on the LO-LCR electoral slates—criticizing them for limiting themselves to an electoral alliance and not committing themselves to building a new party. Meanwhile, if the GR in France calls for building a non-revolutionary "workers party," their Taaffeite comrades in the U.S. support the bourgeois candidate Ralph Nader!

The GR justifies their perspective of building a revolutionary party in stages by citing Leon Trotsky's 1938 call for a labor party in the U.S. This is a blatant falsification. For Trotsky, the labor party slogan was not an alternative to building a communist vanguard party, but a means of furthering that task. The demand on the union bureaucracy (or a section of it) to form a labor party was raised in a particular historical context: the economic crisis, the great strikes in the mid 1930s and the formation of the CIO industrial unions. Trotsky argued that the mass industrial unions, defensive organizations of the working class, were clearly confronted with the need for independent political action. At the same time, he underlined that the labor party slogan was inseparable from the fight for a revolutionary program:

> "Are we in favor of the creation of a reformist labor party? No....
>
> "It can become a reformist party—it depends upon the development. Here comes in the question of program. I mentioned yesterday and I will underline it today—we must have a program of transitional demands, the most complete of them is a workers' and farmers' government. We are for a party, for an independent party of the toiling masses who will take power in the state."
>
> —"Discussion in Mexico City" (April 1938), in *Leon Trotsky on the Labor Party in the United States*

One can see in Brazil what the GR's perspective for a "workers party" comes down to: their Brazilian comrades of Socialismo Revolucionario were for a long time buried in Lula's Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT—Workers Party), including during the first year of the PT's participation in the capitalist government. The GR criticizes the LCR because Miguel Rossetto, a member of the USec's Brazilian affiliate, participated in Lula's government as minister for agrarian development. But the GR hailed Lula's election as a "first victory" (*L'Egalité* No. 99, January-February 2003). The GR now claims that its Brazilian comrades have joined the Democratic and Socialist Movement for a New Party whose aim is to build a new workers party. This "new" PT, whose most well-

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July 1997: Catholics in Portadown, Northern Ireland under siege by British forces. Taaffeites refuse to call for withdrawal of British troops.

Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State

This 1994 pamphlet counterposes the revolutionary politics of the International Communist League to the reformism of the Committee for a Workers International (CWI) led by the Militant Labour organization in Britain.

Includes the entire text of Gauche révolutionnaire/Jeunesses communistes révolutionnaires pamphlet, "The International and the State," with a reply by the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Published in English and French
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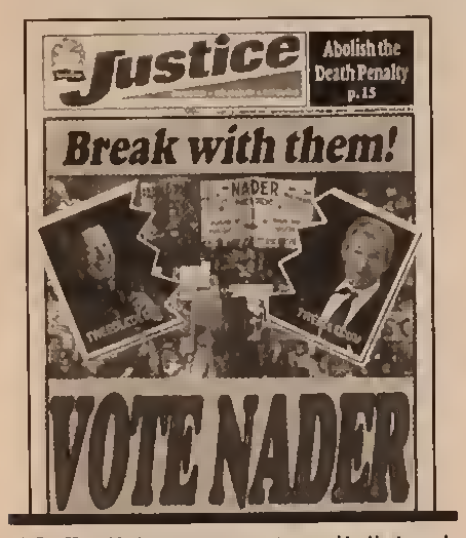
known leader is Heloísa Helena, seeks to "reclaim" the traditions of the old PT which, from 1989 to 2002, ran four times in the presidential elections in a political bloc with bourgeois candidates. So much for the GR's supposed struggle for "class independence."

We reprint below the LTF's election leaflet entitled: "No Vote to LO/LCR in the Regional Elections! 5th Canton of Rouen: Vote for Leïla Messaoudi of the Gauche Révolutionnaire!"

* * *

ROUEN, March 11—In the canton-level elections for Rouen's 5th canton, the Ligue Trotskyste de France calls for a vote to Leïla Messaoudi, candidate of the Gauche Révolutionnaire. The issues raised by the GR's campaign address the felt needs and problems of workers: "Real jobs, decent housing, quality public services!" The racist terror, poverty and massive unemployment that are hitting hardest at the ghettoized public housing complexes like Hauts de Rouen are an outgrowth of the attacks of the Chirac/Raffarin/Sarkozy government—themselves continuing the dirty work of the last capitalist government composed of the Socialist Party, Communist Party and Greens. A vote for the GR represents in a crude way a vote for class independence because they are running on their own, against the candidates of the PS and PCF which for 20 years have been making class-collaborationist alliances with bourgeois parties like the Greens or the Chevènementists. Also, the GR has a



U.S. Taaffeites support capitalist politician Ralph Nader today and in last elections as seen here in *Justice* (September-October 2000).

correct line of opposing the racist expulsions of young women who wear headscarves, even though they don't mention this in their campaign leaflet.

In contrast, we call for a sound rebuff to LO and the LCR by rejecting any vote for their slates in the regional elections (including in Haute-Normandie where the GR has two representatives), because of their support for the expulsions of young women who wear headscarves. LO and the LCR, in spite of their professed opposition to the ex-"Plural Left" of Jospin, the Greens and the PCF, are in fact the ones who have spearheaded the racist campaign to expel young women wearing the headscarf (even though the LCR

AP

20 Minutes

Left: Lila and Alma Lévy, expelled from high school for wearing headscarves. LO's Arlette Laguiller (far right), arm-in-arm with President Chirac's secretary of state for prison construction, in support of ban on headscarves in school at march in Paris, March 6.

opposes the law): in Aubervilliers last September, LO and LCR members who are teachers actively led the fight to expel Alma and Lila Lévy! We of the LTF oppose the racist Chirac law against the headscarf, and we defend the right of Alma, Lila and all young women who wear headscarves to go to public school. At the same time, as communists, we oppose the headscarf and the veil which represent a reactionary social program to confine women within the family, inside the house and in a position of servitude. As we put forward on our banner at the February 14 demonstration: "No to the racist law against youth wearing headscarves! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!"

This campaign against young women wearing headscarves is particularly crucial for deflecting the workers' anger at the government, because it lends itself to the racist lie that the real problem in this country is supposedly not the racist capitalist system but young women wearing the headscarf, and dark-skinned youth in general. You can't purport to oppose the racist, capitalist government without opposing its campaign against young women in headscarves. It's a bourgeois campaign that aims to divide and conquer, by assaulting the rights of the most vulnerable layers of society to pave the way to attacking the whole working class. It is necessary to oppose racist terror and break with the reformist traitors of the PS, PCF, LCR and LO who for years have been tying the workers to Chirac and the French bourgeoisie in one way or another. The LCR criminally called for a vote to Chirac against Le Pen in the 2002 presidential elections! And LO is so tied to the coattails of the government on the question of the headscarf that on March 6 we saw Arlette Laguiller arm in arm with Fadela Amara (of the organization Ni Putes Ni Soumises—Neither Sluts nor Slaves) and Nicole Guedj (Secretary of State for prison construction from Chirac's party)!

Far from having a perspective of leading workers into breaking with the opportunists in the workers movement, the GR aspires quite to the contrary to unity with them, and they explicitly place their participation in the LO/LCR regional slate within this framework, saying that "we must not stop with an electoral alliance." In the January-February *L'Egalité* they give expression to this in a polemic against LO:

> "LO tenaciously holds to its program, refusing to conceive of a future workers party other than as a 'revolutionary communist party.' Of course if such a party were formed we would fight for its program to be revolutionary. But we wouldn't make it a precondition for our participation in a workers party if we can get agreement on a platform based on an anti-capitalist orientation and defending workers' demands."

With this conception of the party, their comrades spent several decades inside the Labour Party in Britain. This conception, the opposite of Lenin's, reflects in fact their reformism. The various instances of support to Chirac by the CP, LO and LCR of the last couple years demonstrate forcefully that an alliance with these opportunists leads not to the revolutionary unity of the proletariat but to its division and subjugation by the bourgeoisie. Lenin understood that what is required is a revolutionary party separate from the reformists and opportunists in the workers movement, i.e., separate from those who want to tie the workers and oppressed to the capitalist system. We fight to accomplish the task that Lenin and Trotsky began by leading the working class to victory in Russia in October of 1917; leading the class struggle to its victorious conclusion with state power in the hands of workers councils all over the world. Only a socialist revolution can sweep away this capitalist system of racism, unemployment and war.

Although we have fundamental political differences with the GR, their candidacy represents a vote for class independence and we call for critical support in the elections in Rouen's 5th canton. On March 21, vote for Leïla Messaoudi of the GR!■

Columbia...

(continued from page 3)

USA-Patriot Act's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. Indeed, GSEU was active last fall in trying to defend foreign students kept out of the country by the "war on terror" who were in danger of losing their academic status. And for decades Harlem residents have rightly detested Columbia as a racist, self-important slumlord. Those who administer the university on behalf of the corporate tycoons who dominate Columbia's Board of Trustees oppose graduate student unionization not merely on economic grounds, but on ideological grounds as well. The ruling class esteems Columbia for churning out weapon designs, corporate moguls, CIA braintrusters and union-busting lawyers—not for the veneer of liberalism it slaps on the edifice when convenient.

The university has insisted that campus workers remain on the job and that students must complete their academic work as usual. SYCers have talked to both campus workers and students who say they agree with our call to shut the university down in principle but that they fear reprisals. Indeed, the university is docking a day's pay from the clerical workers of UAW Local 2110 who struck in sympathy. But if the campus unions were to put forward a perspective of fighting against reprisals, it could greatly limit what the university might do to those seeking to act in real solidarity with the strike.

In contrast to the SYC, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) has actually done its part to *undermine the strike*. The ISO has continued to attend classes and has set up literature tables on the other side of the picket lines. They treat the strike as an event of minimal importance and the picket lines as nothing of any particular concern to them. From campus workers strikes at Yale last year to UC Berkeley in 2002, the ISO has routinely crossed picket lines, showing that in its dictionary "class struggle" means the struggle to get to class whether or not there's a campus strike!

GSEU and other campus unions are fighting against an arrogant, racist educational institution committed to the agenda of the capitalist class. Against the class biases in the American educational system, we call for an abolition of tuition, open admissions and the nationalization of elite private universities like Columbia. *Victory to the GSEU strike!* But these goals will not be brought to fruition without a fight. We seek to win students and youth to the side of the working class, the only class with the numbers, organization and material interest to be able to sweep away the exploitative and racist capitalist system in all its guises.■

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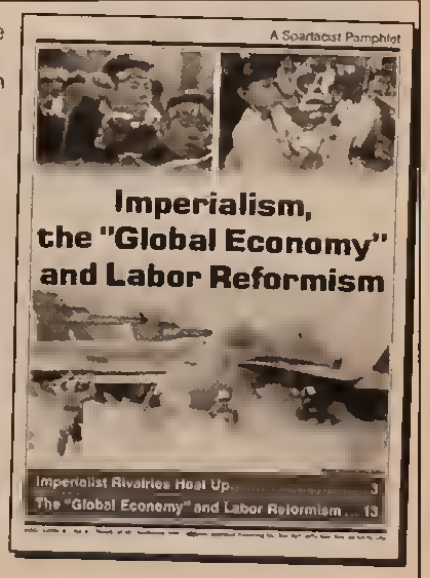

Civil Rights...

(continued from page 5)

Woolworth's lunch counter. They returned the following day with 30 people. More than 60 joined them on the third day, including some white students from Greensboro College. By Thursday, hundreds of black students had joined the growing demonstrations and protests.

A large contingent of black students headed up by the A&T football team marched to downtown Greensboro and met up with a gang of white racists intent on stopping them. "Who do you think you are?" the racists snarled. "We're the Union army!" replied the youths. That statement truly captured the sentiments of many who would soon become involved in the growing civil rights movement. Here it was, almost 100 years to the day that the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, and racist abuse, segregation and terror were still mainstays of black life in the U.S. While not articulated in so many words, this expressed the burning desire to finish the unfinished business of the Civil War, the fight for full racial equality.

Within only two months of the Greenshoro sit-in, 50,000 black students across the South followed their lead. The Woolworth protests also spread to the North, radicalizing white youth, too. Just one month after the Greensboro sit-in, the youth of the SWP, soon to become the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), organized the first Northern Woolworth picket lines. Some of these youth became the founding cadre of the Spartacist League. These Trotskyist youth organized and took part in marches, demonstrations and sit-ins across the country, drawing thousands of students out to fight against segregation and race hate.

It wasn't just the racists and the cops they had to watch out for. There were instances when their "left" opponents actually fingered them to the cops at these pickets! In New York, the Young Socialist comrades formed the New York Youth Committee for Integration, seeking to draw in all forces who wanted to join the civil rights struggle. They struggled continually against groups such as the Socialist Party's youth group, the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), and the Communist Party that set up separate organizations in hopes of drawing militant youth away from the reds. Their pickets featured only "approved signs" and they denounced revolutionary youth for "confusing the issue" by raising broader points (much like our opponents say about us today). These reformists offered invaluable help in politically derailing the demonstrations in the North.

Liberal Pacifism Serves Capitalist Rule

Like many students entering the civil rights struggle at the time, SNCC's founding membership was not particularly leftist or pro-communist. In fact,

UPI

1967: U.S. Army troops called in to suppress mass ghetto rebellion in Detroit; 43 people were killed, over 7,000 arrested.

SNCC harbored illusions in the democratic ideals of America and believed that it could pressure the federal government to intervene on their behalf against the segregationist power structure in the South. It's hard to believe that this organization, founded on passive resistance, calling for love over hate and idolizing King, would go on to become the left wing of the civil rights movement. From the start they exhibited real courage in the work involved in door-to-door voter registration in rural backwaters and "freedom rides" in the Deep South. The climate was one of enormous danger—there were constant threats, beatings. Activists were shot at regularly. James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, murdered by the cops and the Klan in the summer of 1964, are the most well-known martyrs—but they were not only the ones killed.

There was no doubt culture shock on both sides. How often in this racist country do you have 70-year-old black women sharecroppers working side by side with white students from Harvard or Berkeley in a common struggle? These were the kind of things, so beyond the norm, that made this a unique opportunity for the intervention of a revolutionary party. Historically, common struggle is a quick avenue toward breaking down previously held prejudices and backward attitudes. Male and female, black and white, these were the shock troops, the vanguard of the Southern civil rights movement, taking on areas, particularly in Mississippi and southeast Georgia, that no one else dared touch.

By the summer of 1962, SNCC had undergone a dramatic evolution in its politics, culture and personnel. Bitter experience fueled their leftward trajectory, teaching them firsthand that the white liberal leaders were a lot closer to the Dixiecrat racists than they were to the civil rights activists. They watched as the Feds stood by taking notes while protesters were beaten bloody. The Kennedy brothers did nothing—or worse, colluded with the Southern segregationists—being far more interested in preventing a split with their party brethren in the South. When Kennedy was elected with the help of the black vote, hopes were high that he would intervene on behalf of civil rights. Time and again he showed complete indifference, at best. At one point, shortly before the March on Washington, he told King, "I don't think you should be totally harsh on Bull Connor [the notoriously brutal racist Birmingham sheriff]. After all, he has done more for civil rights than almost anybody else."

As the nature of the Democratic Party became clearer and King's subservience to it ever more exposed, young militants were repelled from liberalism. SNCC radicals began referring to King as "De Lawd" after his intervention into protests in Albany, Georgia, where blacks fought back in the face of a Klan mobilization. King denounced this black self-defense and demanded a "day of penance." Fannie Lou Hamer, at the time a 45-year-old sharecropper, captured the sentiment of many civil rights activists when she denounced "these middle-class Negroes, the ones that never had it as hard as the grassroots people in Mississippi. They'll sell their parents for a few dollars. Sometimes I get so disgusted I feel like getting my gun after some of these schoolteachers and chicken-eatin' preachers."

Carrying guns was not a matter of principle or political strategy for most black Southerners—the sheer violence in the South made this a question of survival. There was growing disgust with King's "wear the enemy down with our capacity to suffer." The movement was getting out of the control of the liberal, pacifist leadership. Robert F. Williams, a Korean War vet, was notable as a courageous proponent and organizer of black armed self-defense against Klan terror in Monroe, North Carolina. He was eventually driven out of this country to avoid bogus kidnapping charges and went into exile in Cuba. The Deacons for Defense and Justice formed in Louisiana and spread. Some in SNCC "carried" despite an official ban. To this day the campaign for "gun control" remains aimed at disarming the population, especially workers and blacks. We are opposed to gun control. We say, *gun control kills blacks!*

It wasn't just the fight at home that was shaping political attitudes. The world was undergoing momentous changes, which for the next few years would continue to fuel raging debates, dramatically influencing consciousness and the course of events. From independence movements in Africa to the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese social revolutions, the world was in ferment. That these revolutions and liberation struggles were occurring in non-white nations gave birth to a growing identification among American blacks with the struggles of non-white peoples around the world. The South African call for "One Man, One Vote" was picked up by SNCC. This is the atmosphere in which political youth were forming their ideas and attitudes. But there was no revolutionary party to win the best fighters of this generation to Marxism!

Spartacist Forebears Fight for Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Inside the SWP, the Revolutionary Tendency (RT)—the core of the future Spartacist League—fought for the party to seize the opportunity to recruit black Trotskyist cadre to their ranks. The majority's position was that *no* SWPer was needed in the South at all, since SNCC would become revolutionary on its own in the course of the struggle. A black RTer, Shirley Stoute, received a personal invitation from SNCC's executive secretary, James Forman, to work with SNCC in Atlanta. The SWP sent down a majority agent to spy on her when she went. Among those she was contacting was Stokely Carmichael! Within about a month she was called back to New York, prevented from returning South and not allowed to give her SNCC comrades any statement as to why.

The RT fought this criminal non-intervention, pointing out that the way to build the revolutionary vanguard necessarily meant participating in and building a revolutionary leadership in the *current* struggles of the working class—the fight for black liberation. They put forward a series of demands linking this struggle to broader struggles of the working class in general and addressing immediate needs such as the need for organized self-defense using the tactics of Robert F. Williams as well as union organizing drives, particularly in the South.

The RT pointed out that the SNCC leadership and other radicals would not come to a Marxist program simply by virtue of their militancy—the intervention of a revolutionary party was necessary. The rising upsurge and militancy was contradictory and confused, and this was an enormous opportunity for the intervention of a revolutionary party. The RT fought for the creation of a Trotskyist tendency within the left wing of the civil rights movement. After a bitter political fight on this and other questions, the RT was expelled from the SWP, going on to form the SL in 1966.

The spring and summer of 1963 witnessed a wave of civil rights demonstrations throughout the North and South, unprecedented in both size and intensity. It was estimated that there were over 20,000 arrested, 10 deaths and 35 bombings in 1963 alone (among them the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing which killed four young girls). The footage of blacks being attacked by police dogs, beaten and brutally knocked down with fire hoses in Birmingham was seen around the world. After three years of intense and dangerous work, SNCC had succeeded in registering only a small percentage of the black voting-age population. The events in Birmingham, now

John Herman Williams

Robert F. Williams (center, standing) organized armed black self-defense in Monroe, North Carolina in 1957.

Texas

Group Formed To Help Arm Negroes

AUSTIN — (AP) — Mark Klein, Cornell University student, said today a group is being organized to aid the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which he described as an armed Negro self-defense group.

He said the Deacons have chapters in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi.

The Austin group will be called "The Committee to Aid the Deacons," Klein said. He said it will raise money for the Deacons.

Klein, who is in Austin for the summer, is the spokesman for the group.

Spartacist

Spartacist raised call for organized, armed self-defense for blacks, mid 1960s. August 1965: Clipping from FBI file on Spartacist campaign to raise money for Deacons for Defense and Justice who defended their communities and civil rights activists from Southern white racist terror.

nicknamed "Bombingham," prompted renewed calls for a march on Washington as a means to pressure Kennedy to stop his foot-dragging on the question of civil rights legislation.

We are taught that the March on Washington was the culmination of a series of victorious marches led by King. In fact, it was here that King helped engineer a "mass" political defeat for the cause of black liberation, treacherously tying it to the Democratic Party. At first, SNCC wanted to march on the White House and the Justice Department, but when Kennedy, who was stanchly opposed to the march, caught wind of this, everything changed. Malcolm X caught the moment well in a speech in Detroit a few months after the march (he was still in the Nation of Islam at this time), when he dubbed the march the "Farce on Washington":

> "It was the grass roots out there in the street. [It] scared the white man to death, scared the white power structure in Washington, D. C. to death; I was there. When they found out that this black steamroller was going to come down on the capital, they called in Wilkins; they called in Randolph; they called in these national Negro leaders that you respect and told them, 'Call it off.' Kennedy said, 'Look, you all letting this thing go too far.' And Old Tom said, 'Boss, I can't stop it, because I didn't start it.' I'm telling you what they said. They said, 'I'm not even in it, much less at the head of it.' They said, 'These Negroes are doing things on their own. They're running ahead of us.' And that old shrewd fox, he said, 'Well if you all aren't in it, I'll put you in it. I'll put you at the head of it. I'll endorse it. I'll welcome it. I'll help it. I'll join it'."

And that's exactly what happened. Kennedy called King and other civil rights leaders into his office, and he read them the riot act. The march was immediately moved to the Lincoln Memorial. Only approved signs were allowed to be carried, all speeches had to be approved and no "subversives" would be allowed to speak. John Lewis, national chairman of SNCC, was forced to censor his speech. What they wouldn't allow is telling...

> "We cannot depend on any political party for both the Democrats and Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence.... We will march through the South, through the heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did. We shall pursue our own 'scorched earth' policy and burn Jim Crow to the ground—nonviolently. We shall crack the South into a thousand pieces and put them back together in the image of democracy."

WV Photo

23 October 1999: Labor/black mobilization against KKK in NYC. Fight for black freedom is central to emancipation of labor and all the oppressed.

In the aftermath of this censorship and groveling before the Democrats, in response to King's "I have a dream" speech, SNCC members started wearing buttons reading "I Have a Nightmare." But they still hung onto some illusions.

SNCC launched Freedom Summer, a massive voter registration push, the following year. By the time of the Democratic Party convention, SNCC activists had a list of *80,000* blacks who had tried to register and weren't allowed to! They had all these people sign protest ballots and went to the Democratic Party National Convention in Atlantic City as the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Their aim to get seated at the convention in place of the traditional all-white delegation was quashed by Lyndon B. Johnson, who hoped to maintain his party's lock on the Southern racist vote, abetted by Northern liberals like Hubert Humphrey and anti-communist labor leader Walter Reuther. This was a watershed. James Forman said: "Atlantic City was a powerful lesson, not only for the black people of Mississippi, but for all of SNCC and many other people as well. No longer was there any hope, among those who still had it, that the federal government would change the situation in the Deep South."

This opened a precious window of opportunity: illusions in the Democratic Party and in reform were shattered, and black nationalism, born of the defeat of the liberal civil rights strategy, had not yet sealed off white militants and leftists from black militants. Radical youth, some not so young, shaped by the previous years of intense social struggle, were looking beyond the framework of capitalism for answers.

The struggle spread to the North. Blacks in the North had "equality under the law" but still faced the raw racism of this country. When King and SNCC came to Chicago to fight for equal housing and black equality, they were met by racist mobs. With no program beyond pressuring the racist capitalist state, with no program to fight the causes of racial discrimination rooted deep in the economic and social structure of capitalist society—King and the civil rights movement hit a wall; the program of liberal integration had gone as far as it could. Fueled by desperation and despair, the Northern ghettos erupted. From Watts to Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago, U.S. troops stormed the ghettos, brutally smashing the upheavals. It was here that King's conditional pacifism was fully exposed. In the wake of the Watts riots he said, "It was necessary that as powerful a police force as possible be brought in to check them."

It is the job of revolutionaries to raise the existing consciousness, not run with the status quo as our opponents do. Not just say what is; say what can and must be. The newly formed Spartacist tendency undertook some exemplary work in this period, defending those victimized and fighting for a revolutionary program, but we did not have the forces nor the authority to have a significant impact. We fought to intersect the "black power" militants. Our call for a "Freedom Labor Party" was in direct counterposition to the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party that sought to pressure the Democrats. Our campaign for organizing aid for the Deacons for Defense and Justice was carried out under the slogan "every dime buys a bullet." But by and large a generation of politicized youth accepted the premise that blacks and whites must fight their own fight—accepted the sectoral politics that are still very much with us today.

So now it is 50 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, a half-century since the civil rights movement began, and what has changed? The most important gain is the smashing of legal segregation. Legal, formal democratic rights were obtained. The South today is a long way from the South of the 1950s. The gains are real and important—but *partial and reversible*. Fundamentally, the situation for blacks in this country is *more segregated* and getting worse. Industry has been decimated, leaving blacks, especially black youth, in staggering levels of unemployment without a future. Many of the attacks associated with Bush today, the budget cuts, attacks on affirmative action, the slashing of welfare and jobs and increased state repression were put in place and carried out by the Democrats. Once again, there is an enormous amount of social kindling building up around the country. At some point, perhaps in the not so distant future, something is going to ignite it.

It is our purpose to build the party that will give that struggle political direction. Only through the intervention of a multiracial, Trotskyist party, providing *the* essential ingredient of revolutionary leadership can the fight to get rid of this capitalist system once and for all be won. Our commitment to carrying out the revolutionary integration of blacks in this country is codified in our call to finish the Civil War and fight for black liberation through socialist revolution. We will settle for nothing less.■

Transit...

(continued from page 12)

> discipline, gutting minimal union grievance procedures. This constitutes a grave attack on the unions' very purpose: the defense of the workers against the bosses. "Arbitrary firings based solely on management's interpretation of someone's off-the-cuff comment hand the bosses a tool against union militants and 'undesirables' like minorities and immigrants. Added to this is the sinister attempt to recruit workers to inform on each other in the name of 'preventing violence.' The result is a mechanism to purge the unions reminiscent of the McCarthyite witchhunt of the 1950s, substituting a trumped-up fear of violence for the red-scare anti-communism of the anti-Soviet Cold War."

In defense of Carlos Blackman, Local 100 officials have filed a grievance, held rallies at 240th St. drawing union members from other work locations and divisions, and is reportedly filing a lawsuit to stop the company's drive to fire Blackman. The groundswell of support for Blackman transcends ethnic, racial and national divisions within the workforce.

When the TWU Local 100 president Roger Toussaint was a Track Division chairman in 1999, the NYCT bosses attempted to railroad him. In response, hundreds of workers rallied to demand his reinstatement. As we wrote at the time, "The TA's firing of Toussaint is a vicious attack against the entire union and must be fought" ("Reinstate Victimized New Directions Supporter! Down With New Directions Anti-Union Court Suit!" *WV* No. 715, 11 June 1999). The case was widely publicized and the scandal plagued the company while generating support for Toussaint, whom we defended while criticizing his and New Directions' traitorous strategy of suing Local 100 and their union opponents in the bosses' courts. Yet despite his personal history of victimization, which was fought by fellow workers, Toussaint has not used his office to make a public statement in defense of Carlos Blackman. What's necessary is an all-out mobilization of Local 100. Instead, Toussaint and the Local 100 top brass appear to be relying on the stacked deck of "binding arbitration" and the capitalist courts to win back his job.

Like the rest of the AFL-CIO officialdom, the TWU pro-capitalist bureaucracy stands on the program of class collaboration, which means subordinating the interests of the workers and tying them to the capitalist system, mainly through their support to the Democratic Party. In the eyes of the NYCT and all capitalist exploiters, resistance to exploitation and oppression is a "crime," but they are the criminals whose brutal system must be swept away by socialist revolution, led by a multiracial class-struggle workers party. Local 100 is the powerhouse of labor in New York City. With a class-struggle leadership based on mobilizing the social power of the union, attacks like the one against Carlos Blackman would be met with the united force of the union in defense of itself. An injury to one is an injury to all! Mobilize the whole union to defend Brother Blackman!■

Labor Black League for Social Defense Discussion Group

U.S. Out of Iraq! UN Stay Out!

Saturday, May 15, 4:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph Avenue, Third Floor

BAY AREA

For more information: (510) 839-0851 or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

Spartacus Youth Club Forum

Defend the Palestinian People!

All Israeli Troops and Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!
For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

For more information: (312) 563-0441
e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

Wednesday, May 19, 7:00 p.m.
University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, Room TBA
5811 South Ellis Avenue

Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste Forum

"National Unity" Fuels Anglo-Chauvinist Bigotry

Labor Upsurge Sweeps Quebec

Independence for Quebec!

Saturday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.
Trinity-St. Paul's Centre
427 Bloor Street West
(1 block west of Spadina Station)

For more information: (416) 593-4138
e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

TORONTO

Torture, Inc....

(continued from page 1)

i.e., popular opposition to foreign military adventures as a result of the humiliating defeat of the U.S. in Southeast Asia three decades ago. But Iraq is not Vietnam and the Vietnam War was not merely horror inflicted by U.S. imperialism. The U.S. was defeated in a social revolution by the heroic Vietnamese, whose struggle freed their country from the yoke of imperialist subjugation and capitalist exploitation.

Now a welter of politicians, Republicans and Democrats alike, howl about who is "losing Iraq," as the dread words "swamp" and "quagmire" are resurrected in *New York Times* editorials. Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, who previously acknowledged that atrocities were committed by U.S. forces during the Vietnam War, now hopes to backpedal his way to the White House, whitewashing U.S. war crimes in Southeast Asia and pledging to up the number of American troops in active service.

Especially in the U.S., the pictures of sexual abuse have done real damage to the Bush administration because its core constituency is the Christian right. These are the same people who pushed the Meese Commission in 1986 against pornography during the Reagan/Bush Sr. administration and tried to bring down Clinton with a "sex scandal." Now they're shocked that they're confronted with photos on the nightly news and in every tabloid of a young white woman soldier from West Virginia behaving like an actress in an S&M porno film.

While the sexual psychosis and breathtaking hypocrisy of this lot tempts one to dismiss the religious fundamentalists as kooks, they are deadly serious and their views have impact on the world. An estimated 15-18 percent of U.S. voters belong to Christian fundamentalist churches, as does Attorney General John Ashcroft and other powerful political figures. The intersection of religion and policy is driven not least by the fundamentalists' desire to hasten the second coming of Christ. There is a convergence between the Christian right and the pro-Zionist neocons on U.S. policy in the Near East, for different purposes.

Influential sections of the American ruling class—e.g., the *New York Times*—are now calling for the firing of Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld for bearing ultimate responsibility for the crimes in Abu Ghraib. Bush dressed down Rumsfeld, *not* because of torture in the Iraqi prison, which there had been reports of for a full year, but only because he didn't know there was photographic evidence. In his testimony before the House and Senate, Rumsfeld stated that the worst is yet to come. The axing of Rumsfeld, despite Bush's pledge to "stand by his man," could happen but would in no way change the U.S. policy of mass murder and torture in Iraq. There will be no justice served until *all* the war criminals and commanders, from Bush and the Pentagon chiefs to their underlings as well as their Democratic Party counterparts, are swept from power through a proletarian socialist revolution.

AP photos

American soldier Lynndie England humiliates and abuses prisoner in Abu Ghraib prison. Torture is U.S. policy, directed from the highest level. Right: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld tours Abu Ghraib with Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, head of Military Police brigade in charge of prison, September 2003.

U.S. "War on Terror" Targets Everyone

By now the whole world has seen the photographs of naked, hooded, sexually abused detainees, subjected to practices that purposefully violate the deepest taboos of Muslim society. With great bravery, former prisoners are now speaking out, despite the great shame they experienced. "Then the interpreter told us to strip," one man told the *New York Times* (5 May) about his ordeal. "We told him: 'You are Egyptian, and you are a Muslim. You know that as Muslims we can't do that.' When we refused to take off our clothes, they beat us and tore our clothes off with a blade."

After Seymour Hersh in the *New Yorker* (10 May) and CBS-TV's *60 Minutes II* blew the lid off the atrocities in late April (though CBS suppressed the news for two weeks at the direct request of the Pentagon), an early March 53-page "secret" report on a military investigation of Abu Ghraib by Major General Antonio M. Taguba, "Article 15-6 Investigation of the 800th Military Police Brigade," finally hit the Internet on May 5 (available on National Public Radio's Web site npr.org, among others). It offers chillingly matter-of-fact details on the general's findings: "That between October and December 2003, at the Abu Ghraib Confinement Facility (BCCF), numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses were inflicted on several detainees." The report also stated that prisoners were brought to Abu Ghraib by "Other Government Agencies (OGAs) without accounting for them, knowing their identities, or even the reason for their detention." They were called "ghost detainees," who at one point "were moved around the facility to hide them from a visiting International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) survey team."

While the scandal has now become a major political issue internationally and domestically, in reality the torture and other crimes committed by U.S. and allied forces, first in Afghanistan and now in Iraq, have long been public knowledge and we have consistently reported on it in *Workers Vanguard*. As we go to press, more stories and reports of abuse and killings by U.S. forces around the globe, including possible CIA killings, from Afghanistan and Guantánamo and Iraq to detention centers here in the U.S., are beginning to pour out, from former prisoners and their families, from the Red Cross, from "human rights" agencies. It's clear what is so far known is only the surface of a cesspool of consciously inflicted human misery. The U.S. has a policy of deporting prisoners to death, presumably preceded by torture, to countries such as Syria, Israel, Pakistan, Egypt and Yemen. In his 2003 State of the Union address, Bush made a chilling joke of it all. "Let's put it this way: They are no longer a problem for the United States."

The new "privatized" army of mercenaries comprises experienced CIA and Army thugs. CACI International is a CIA-connected "contractor" for prisoner interrogation and counterintelligence implicated in the Abu Ghraib scandal. Vance International, which provides security and guards for the U.S. in Iraq, has often been unleashed against striking labor on the home front. They terrorized and beat strikers and their families in the Pittston miners strike in 1993, the Caterpillar strike in 1994, and fractured a striker's skull in the 1995 Detroit newspaper strike. The *New Yorker* (3 May) reported that Paul Bremer's "Counselor for Iraqi Security Forces," James Steele, who trained Iraqi cops last summer to "deal with terrorists," is a veteran Reagan-era military adviser to the El Salvador regime's anti-FMLN death squads, who was involved with Oliver North's arms-to-the-Contras operation in Nicaragua, and was in Panama training cops when the U.S. invaded in 1989. The new military overseer of U.S. prisons in Iraq is the sinister former commander of the extralegal, Guantánamo Bay concentration camp, Major General Geoffrey Miller.

The hideous consequences of the Bush administration's unprecedented assault on civil rights at home and murderous slaughter abroad are now becoming clear for all to see. A recent lawsuit against John Ashcroft's Justice Department by two tortured Muslim men, picked up after September 11, asserts they were repeatedly strip-searched, shackled and slammed against walls and sexually assaulted in the Brooklyn detention center. We have fought to mobilize labor and its allies against the war in Iraq and against domestic terror against immigrants, in protests and rallies across the country. We have opposed the extralegal detention measures from the beginning of the massive post-September 11, 2001 "war on terror" assault. In an *amicus* brief filed by the SL and Partisan Defense Committee on behalf of Jose Padilla, a U.S. citizen imprisoned in a military brig, we stated that the president's power to declare a citizen an "enemy combatant" is consonant with the rationale of a police state. "Stripped of legalese, what the President asserts is nothing less than the right to disappear citizens."

Capitalism and the Atrocities of War

Capitalist society was born in blood: modern imperialism continues the brutal practices of mass murder, torture and humiliation that accompany exploitation of labor and the ceaseless struggle between competing imperialist forces to dominate the world. From the Belgian Congo killing fields of King Leopold and the massacres in the Philippines by U.S. troops in the early days of its imperialist expansion to the first concentration camps, created by the Spanish in Cuba and a little later used by the British in South Africa in the Boer War, to Japanese imperialist atrocities in China and Nazi Germany's Holocaust, imperialism has created a world in constant, cruel convulsions.

After World War II, the U.S. inherited the tattered British and French imperial mantle in the Near East, to lord over what the poet laureate of British imperialism, Rudyard Kipling, had earlier demeaned as "lesser breeds." Britain today, its forces in Iraq accused of brutality and killing scandals, keeps up in a reduced way its own torture arsenal, honed mainly in Northern Ireland, where the infamous Long Kesh wire cages and torture chambers were employed against Irish Republican militants. As for France, *Le Monde* (4 May) snottily front-paged a cartoon of an American boot crushing a man's face in the dirt, with the caption "Repeat after me: DE-MO-CRA-CY!" Yet the French ruling class, former colonial occupiers of Vietnam (whose defeat at Dien Bien Phu occurred 50 years ago on May 7), has its own horrible history, not only in Vietnam but in Algeria, where revelations of mass torture and murder still haunt. And the French state metes out police terror daily to the large North African population in France itself.

Some apologists for the U.S. may use this history to claim, "Well, everyone does it, it's just human nature." No, it is not human nature, it is imperialist and neocolonialist policy. It's true that Abu Ghraib itself was the dictator Saddam Hussein's own prison where opponents of Hussein were brutalized. Uganda's Idi Amin, Haiti's "Papa Doc" Duvalier, El Salvador's "Blowtorch Bob" D'Aubuisson (so named for his favorite interrogation device)—these names still have the power to shock, and they all were taught by their imperialist masters. For decades the CIA and U.S. military have trained right-wing regimes, especially in Latin America, in the techniques of torture to be used mainly against working-class militants and leftist organizers. Atrocities by capitalist and neocolonial regimes around the world abound; one example we highlighted is the arrest, imprison-

Ligato/Philadelphia Bulletin

Philadelphia cops strip search Black Panthers in the streets during 1970 raid. The domestic face of U.S. imperialism is state terror against blacks, labor, left and minorities.

ment and torture of homosexuals in Egypt's prisons—see "Protest Anti-Gay Persecution in Egypt!" (*WV* No. 801, 11 April 2003).

But in fact "everyone" does *not* employ such barbaric methods. We communists denounce imperialist torture and murder as barbaric weapons of exploitation. Our goal is the liberation of the working class and all the oppressed from enforced inequality and exploitation, and we repudiate such methods. Communist military policy seeks to unite working-class and oppressed people across national boundaries, while crushing the ruling classes who drive their populations into war against each other. Marxism, a working-class, international and revolutionary political force, had its highest expression in practice so far in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The historical experience of Trotsky's Red Army under conditions of civil war and imperialist invasion is a stunning refutation that torture and other atrocities are endemic to all armies.

In 1920 the army of capitalist Poland under the nationalist strongman Jozef Pilsudski, backed by Western imperialism, invaded the Soviet Ukraine. Captured Red Army men were routinely tortured before being killed. As the Red Army launched a successful counter-offensive, Leon Trotsky, head of the Red Army, issued an order on 10 May 1920:

> "From all sectors of the Western and South-Western fronts come reports of unheard-of atrocities committed by Polish White Guard forces upon captured and wounded Red Army men. They are tortured, beaten, shot and hanged.... These facts arouse justified fury and desire for vengeance in the heart of every warrior. Such vengeance is just. But it must be aimed at those who are really responsible for the dishonourable attack and the brutal atrocities—at Pilsudski's Government, at the Polish gentry and the Polish bourgeoisie. It would, however, be wrong and unworthy of revolutionary fighters to take vengeance on Polish prisoners. No, the Red Army will show magnanimity towards a captured and wounded enemy.
>
> "To a captured Polish Legionary, be he peasant or worker, we shall explain the criminality of his ruling classes. We shall enlighten his mind and make of him our best friend and cothinker, just as we did with our German, Austrian, Hungarian, Kolchakite, Denikinite [Russian White Army] and other prisoners-of-war."
>
> — *The Military Writings and Speeches of Leon Trotsky*, Vol. 3 (New Park Publications, 1981)

Of course, some atrocities did occur on the Red Army side, as the writer Isaac Babel who rode with the "Red Cavalry" in the 1920 Poland campaign exposed. In his story, *Argamak*, Babel recounts: "The Cossack Tikhomolov had killed two captured officers without authorization.... Squadron Commander Baulin came up with a punishment much harsher than anything the tribunal could have inflicted—he took Tikhomolov's stallion Argamak away from him, and sent Tikhomolov off to the transport carts."

WV Photo

March 2002: Spartacist contingent at Brooklyn protest against detention of immigrants in wake of September 11.

To do away with imperialist war, it is necessary to put an end to the capitalist system that breeds war. While all eyes are turned to the crimes committed by U.S. imperialism in Iraq, it is also necessary to bring sharply into focus the developing crime at home: anger and revulsion with the Iraq war is channeled by the trade-union officialdom and even ostensible socialists into the "anybody but Bush" campaign to put the Democrats back in power. This is a recipe to keep the system running as it does—a system based on exploitation of labor, a system propped up by racial oppression, a system which breeds wars of conquest for the capitalist market irrespective of which bourgeois party rules. Our purpose is to forge the multiracial revolutionary workers party that will sweep the bloody capitalist class from power and put the wealth of this country into the hands of the workers who create it and to the service of humanity. ■

Truckers...

(continued from page 12)

Union-Tribune, 6 May).

The situation cries out for a union organizing drive. The bosses claim that the truckers' status as "owner-operators" makes unionization illegal, but labor has always made gains through hard class struggle, in ***defiance*** of the bosses' laws. The longshore union leaders tell their members that the truckers don't want to be in unions. Yet a South Asian trucker in Oakland expressed the sentiment that we found everywhere, "If a union official came to organize us, at least 98 percent of the workforce would say yes." Port truckers in L.A. have fought hard on four separate occasions over the past two decades to unionize (see "Victory to L.A. Port Truckers!" *WV* No. 645, 10 May 1996). The ***unionization of port truckers***, no matter which union carried it out, would forge working-class solidarity on the docks between longshoremen and truckers and tend to break through the divisions between immigrant and American-born, between black and white, young and old. The truckers also need a ***union hiring hall*** that ensures the equitable distribution of work and a standardized pay rate.

The Teamsters and International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), along with the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) on the East Coast, announced an alliance in December 2001 to make the ports "100 percent union," but none of these unions has made a real effort to organize the truckers. Quite the opposite. The Teamsters rushed to disassociate themselves from the militant tactics of the truckers, telling the *American Shipper* (28 April), "We are not going to lend our name to something unless we have control over the agenda," and instead presented a resolution to the Port Authority calling for "fair and equitable fuel price surcharges." A few Teamsters bureaucrats came out to the rallies while ***Teamster-organized "SeaLogix" truckers were seen working during the strike in and around the Maersk/Sealand terminal in Oakland.*** So much for class solidarity! But then this comes as no surprise from a bureaucracy that has run a protectionist and chauvinist campaign against allowing Mexican truckers to enter the United States.

The leadership of the ILWU, whose members work closely with the port truckers on a daily basis, is no better. The dispatch tape of the San Francisco Bay Area ILWU local requested that longshoremen go directly to their job locations so as to avoid running into the truckers' protest, noting that the companies had already been informed! The ILWU leadership, which is fond of displaying the labor slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all," should have instructed its members to honor the port truckers' action.

Organizing the port truckers would greatly strengthen the ILWU, whose future is threatened by its increasing isolation and vulnerability as a small, skilled workforce. Even today, without being organized, the power the port truckers hold was clearly demonstrated in the effect its week-long action had on the Port of Oakland, the fourth-busiest port in the country: Union Pacific had to reroute its freight away from Northern California, while the NUMMI auto plant threatened to shut down manufacturing. ILWU backing for an organizing drive is crucial for the port truckers, just as the port truckers can make or break any attempt by longshoremen to shut down the docks.

Instead, the ILWU bureaucrats have sided with the anti-labor, anti-immigrant and anti-black "war on terror" against the overwhelmingly minority port truckers. In November 2002 when Congress passed and Bush signed the Maritime Security Act—which threatens the jobs of all port workers, especially immigrants—the ILWU bureaucrats signed on to the government's "security" witchhunt, offering up their members to help police the ports, while ILWU International president James Spinosa vituperated against "unknown truck drivers" being "allowed free access to our work environment."

A hand-written sign prominent at a rally at Banning Park outside Long Beach on April 30 said "No War": in Oakland, almost every trucker strongly opposed the occupation of Iraq. The truckers we spoke to took a lively interest in broader political questions, from the five-month grocery strike in Southern California to our defense of the Cuban Revolution. Immigrant workers have brought with them traditions of class struggle and left-wing political views so vitally needed in the more politically backward American union movement.

The workplace remains the one place in this country that is integrated. Truckers in L.A. are largely Latinos, while in Oakland there are also South Asians, Africans, Arabs, Iranians and Filipinos. In the absence of a union, ethnic divisions are often accentuated. Truckers have been targets of anti-immigrant chauvinism, while sometimes exhibiting bigotry toward blacks. But as one comrade remarked about the Oakland protest, "There was an effort by each ethnic group of truckers to reach out to the others in the speeches and in general; they kept stressing that they have to be fully united to win. It was a concrete expression of how class action works to tear down ethnic and racial divisions."

To ensure such unity of the working class and its ability to use its potential social power requires a ***political*** struggle within the unions for a class-struggle leadership that would fight against the racial oppression of blacks and for the rights of women, as well as against anti-immigrant bigotry. What the current Teamsters, ILWU and ILA misleaderships have in common is a pro-capitalist outlook. Their belief in collaboration with the workers' class enemy was nicely summed up by Ron Carver, assistant director to the Teamsters' port division: "We have a history of advocating for our employers" (*Journal of Commerce*, 15 March).

An important lesson was learned in Oakland on 9 February 2002, when the Partisan Defense Committee, the Labor Black League for Social Defense and the revolutionary Spartacist League initiated and built the first demonstration against the attacks on immigrants and in opposition to the Maritime Security Act pushed by the capitalists (both Democrats and Republicans) in the aftermath of September 11. The protest was actively built by ILWU Local 10 and by the SF Day Laborers. To organize it, we had to have a political fight against the ILWU International bureaucracy's attempt to sacrifice the port truckers on the altar of "national security." That day, we mobilized the power of labor independent from the capitalist parties and illustrated on a small scale what a revolutionary workers party would do—mobilize all the oppressed in a united struggle for workers power.

Port truckers are asking for those who support their work action to come out for the court date for the three arrested on April 30 in L.A. The hearing is currently scheduled for June 23 at 8:30 a.m. at the Superior Court, 214 South Fetterly Avenue in East Los Angeles. The arrested truckers also request that protest letters be sent to: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol Building, Sacramento, CA 95814. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-li.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANAOA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

WORKERS VANGUARD

Reinstate TWU Local 100 Shop Chairman Carlos Blackman!

Down With New York City Transit's "Workplace Violence" Witchhunt!

NEW YORK—On April 21, scores of Transport Workers Union (TWU) members rallied outside of the 240th St. subway car maintenance shop to protest the suspension of union shop chairman Carlos Blackman, a staunch fighter against abusive speedup and unsafe working conditions. In an ominous "workplace violence" frame-up, Blackman was suspended on March 8 because a supervisor claimed that he had heard Blackman discuss the February 27 shooting death of two supervisors at Coney Island Subway Yard. As Blackman told the *Chief-Leader* (30 April): "He says he overheard me saying to another worker that I was sorry for what happened to the two supervisors, but they deserved it for [firing] the worker charged with shooting them. That never happened." Blackman added that a second Local 100 member can back up his account. We say: Drop the frame-up charges against TWU shop chairman Carlos Blackman! Reinstate him now with full back pay and his record wiped clean!

Bryan/TWU Local 100

Carlos Blackman (center) with union brothers at Bronx support rally.

Blackman sticks up for the workers and that's why the NYC Transit (NYCT) bosses want to get rid of him. Six months ago, Blackman temporarily halted unsafe repair work in the shop when fluid was leaking from one of the hydraulic jacks holding up an 80,000-pound subway car. Four years ago, Blackman stood up against the 240th St. bosses' racist attempts to suspend or fire an entire crew of 18 cleaners, and he is still a party in a federal discrimination lawsuit against NYCT management at the dilapidated century-old repair shop. If they succeed in firing an elected shop chairman for nothing at all, then they will run roughshod over the entire Local 100 membership by targeting every union militant on the pretext of "workplace violence" against the company! All this takes place in the context of the capitalist rulers' "war on terror," which is actually a war on immigrants, blacks and unions.

In a March 11 memo included with every worker's paycheck, NYCT president Larry Reuter states, "There is no reason for and there will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats or bullying by anyone. Individuals who conduct themselves in such a manner will be banned from the property and dismissed from service." Workers at a pay line showed *Workers Vanguard* salesmen the memo and complained, "Now, you can't even look at a foreman sideways or raise your voice without the threat of being fired." Reuter's "zero tolerance" is aimed exclusively at workers and the union. Supervisors who regularly hurl insults, including racist and anti-immigrant slurs, and demonstrate gross disregard for workplace safety and health go untouched every day of the week. The point of this harassment and intimidation is NYCT's drive for intensified production.

Just weeks ago, *WV* salesmen were told that a subway superintendent at the Coney Island Overhaul Shop harangued an assembly of mostly immigrant workers with the diktat, "No English, no overtime." Muslim women bus drivers at Brooklyn's Flatbush Depot have been disciplined and pulled from public service and their routes for wearing their Islamic headscarves. A few years ago, a black worker at the East New York bus maintenance shop had to fight for his job after standing up to the physical assault and racist slurs of a boss who (like all the others) was never "banned from the property and dismissed from service." The bosses' racism and anti-immigrant bigotry is designed to perpetuate divisions within the workforce to prevent the necessary working-class unity to counter their attacks. This is what the heavily black TWU workers describe as NYCT "plantation justice."

The fight against the victimization of Carlos Blackman is a necessary struggle that TWU Local 100 must wage against the NYCT's dangerous anti-union drive about "workplace violence." As we wrote in "'Workplace Violence' Witchhunt Targets Unions, Minorities" (*WV* No. 695, 28 August 1998):

> "The bourgeoisie's manufactured hysteria about an 'epidemic' of 'workplace violence' serves to promote one of the most threatening new weapons of the capitalist employers against militants, minority workers and the very foundations of union organization. Anyone tagged as 'potentially violent' can be stripped of rights and treated as a criminal. The programs typically bypass union contract protections against arbitrary company

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Support and Organize the Port Truckers!

AP

Wilmington, California, April 30: Hundreds of port truckers protest rising fuel costs and demand higher pay per load.

OAKLAND, May 10—The truck drivers who transfer containers in and out of the busy Port of Oakland stopped work for one week, cutting the movement of containers by as much as 90 percent and leaving cargo piled up on the docks. Protesting the price of diesel fuel which has skyrocketed while load rates have remained unchanged, the Oakland port truckers are part of a growing national movement of truckers who vow to hold further protests and stop-work actions until they gain more pay per load. Truckers at Union Pacific's Lathrop rail facility near Stockton, California also stopped work for over a week; a two-day stop-work action took place in Norfolk, Virginia on May 6 and 7. Further actions are projected for other ports across the country and in Canada.

Hundreds of truckers in Los Angeles and Long Beach staged protests on April 30. Three truckers parked their rigs on Highway 5, delaying the morning commute by three hours, while others slowed traffic to five miles per hour on the Harbor (110) Freeway, with a banner reading "The Rich Keep Getting Richer & the Poor Keep Getting Poorer." According to National Lawyers Guild attorney Jim De Maegt, at least three Latino port truckers in L.A. were arrested on misdemeanor charges. A picketer and a trucker face charges of battery and inciting to riot for attempting to stop a truck in Lathrop; four were arrested in Oakland on various trumped-up assault and vandalism charges. We demand that all charges be dropped now!

In the Port of Oakland, a group of 300 very loud and determined truckers rallied daily last week in front of the APL terminal and roving pickets marched to each gate, trying to stop trucks from getting in or out of the berths. The Port bosses initially tried to head off the work action by setting up a commission "to hear truckers' complaints." When that was rejected, the Port convened a meeting where some companies agreed to raise rates. But as a representative of the truckers told the *San Francisco Chronicle* (8 May), "You can't have half the truckers go back to work and let the others hang." Finally the Port got a court order on May 7 barring the protests from the terminal gates. Though truckers have now returned to work, they are still boycotting four trucking companies that refused to increase fuel surcharges and are vowing to strike again next month if promised rate increases do not materialize.

Those who service the ports up and down the West Coast are mostly short-haul drivers who must buy their own rigs and pay all associated expenses such as registration, fuel, insurance and maintenance costs in order to work. Port truckers were once organized and paid union wages. With the deregulation of the trucking industry in the early '80s, combined with the general assault on labor in the U.S., the port truckers now are paid by the load, often having to wait hours at terminal gates, and work 15-18 hours a day, with no union protection against the big shipping and hauling companies. As one trucker in Virginia expressed it during the Norfolk work action: "It's a slow death. We can't afford to shut down, but we can't afford to continue to run, either." She said she "earned" $76,000 last year but was left with just $15,000 after deducting her expenses. "I have no medical, I have no savings, I have no retirement, I have no dental. I can't do it anymore" (*San Diego*

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 827

28 May 2004

Zionist Massacre in Gaza

MAY 24—As part of Israel's bloody campaign of terror against the Palestinian population, an Israeli helicopter gunship and a tank fired rockets and artillery shells at a protest march in the southern Gaza city of Rafah on May 19, killing at least ten people, almost half of whom were children, and wounding dozens more. With ambulances overflowing, bodies of the dead and injured were carried in donkey carts to the hospital. The slaughter in Rafah took place in the context of an Israeli military offensive in Gaza that has killed over 45 Palestinians and demolished scores of homes. The bloody incursion was triggered by clashes the previous week between Palestinian fighters and the Israeli military in which up to 13 Israeli soldiers, and many more Palestinians, were killed.

Roundups, assassinations and house demolitions—this is the reality of Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's much-vaunted "withdrawal plan" from Gaza. Earlier this month, the right-wing Likud party handed Sharon a defeat by voting against his withdrawal proposal. Two weeks later, a massive May 15 rally of at least 150,000 people was held in Tel Aviv demanding that troops and settlers be pulled out from Gaza and that negotiations with the Palestinian Authority begin.

Increasingly, Gaza resembles a concentration camp where 1.3 million Palestinians are squeezed into an area no larger than five miles by 25 miles. With Gaza surrounded by an electronic fence, the only people who have any freedom of movement are the 7,500 fascistic Zionist settlers who control whole swaths of the area and are protected by Israeli soldiers. Unemployment is over 50 percent and malnutrition is rampant, especially among children and the aged. The pretext Israel is using for the latest incursions into Gaza is to shut down tunnels between Rafah and the Sinai desert in Egypt. But as Israeli journalist

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Reuters

Palestinian man carries child killed by Israeli rocket attack against protest march in Gaza, May 19.

"War on Terror" Targets Everyone

The monsters who just wantonly blew away over 40 men, women and children at a wedding party in Iraq near the Syrian border are the same U.S. forces who authorized vicious tortures and killings around the world. Daily new Internet pictures from Abu Ghraib reveal fresh glimpses of hell, a combination of the techniques of Southern racist terror with pornographic humiliation and the CIA's "scientific" infliction of pain. Now that some of the photos are out, the capitalist media admit that the White House and Pentagon had their bureaucrats and lawyers advise on just how much murderous terror they could get away with.

This world of fear is what the government wants to apply to any "dissenters" here at home. Since September 11, 2001 the U.S. government has cynically manipulated the population's horror at the heinous attack on the World Trade Center to massively intensify an assault on civil liberties and vastly expand police powers. Untold thousands have been swept up in racist roundups of mainly Near Eastern, South Asian and Muslim people, detained without charges, tortured and abused in prisons across America. Thousands more have been deported, often to torture and death. The anti-terror laws are now being used to prosecute people who have nothing even allegedly to do with "terrorism." This May a Mexican street gang in the Bronx was indicted on 70 counts, including murder and robberies, under New York's new anti-terror law; the Bronx district attorney said the terror stipulation was justified while noting the statute is "to protect society against acts of political terrorism."

This April the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in three important "war on terror" cases challenging some of the government's most aggressive efforts to shred civil liberties. The stakes in these cases are high, for what the government is asserting is nothing less than its right to disappear citizens and strip them of their formal and fundamental democratic rights. There has always been a wide gulf between formal bourgeois legality and the race- and class-biased repression and violence that are routine to capitalist rule. If the government does away with even the formal nods to democratic rights, then "justice" in this country is going to resemble the rule of reactionary juntas and dictatorships propped up by American imperialism around the globe. If they can effectively abolish citizenship rights, then the plight of immigrants here and foreign victims of U.S. policies will be even worse.

Reuters

AP

Commander in Chief Bush and top cop Ashcroft—"war on terror" equals torture, concentration camps like Guantánamo (right).

On April 28, appeals were presented on behalf of two American citizens held indefinitely as "enemy combatants" without charges or a hearing. One of these prisoners, Yaser Esam Hamdi, was detained in Afghanistan in late 2001. The other, Jose Padilla, was arrested in May 2002 at Chicago O'Hare airport on a material witness warrant and then turned over to military authorities. This year, on April 20, lawyers presented the appeal of foreign nationals arrested in Afghanistan and dragged to the hellhole U.S. military camp in Guantánamo, Cuba, where over 600 are now detained. The Guantánamo prisoners are seeking the right to challenge their captivity in American courts through a *habeas corpus* petition. With supreme arrogance, the government asserts that American courts have no right to review a presidential decision, and that the U.S. has no jurisdiction over Guantánamo prisoners because the American army base is on Cuban territory! We Trotskyists suggest then that the Cuban government assert its authority over this imperialist beachhead on the Cuban deformed workers state. U.S. out of Guantánamo! Free all the detainees, from Guantánamo to Iraq to the U.S.!

The Padilla Case: Evisceration of Citizenship

"Today the government asks this court for a broad ruling that would allow the president unlimited power to imprison any American anywhere at any time without trial simply by labeling him an enemy combatant," warned Padilla's attorney, Jennifer Martinez, in the Supreme Court hearing. On April 9, the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee filed a brief of *amici curiae* (friends of the court) on Padilla's behalf, just as we did in July 2003 when his case was argued in the

continued on page 8

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The RCP and the "Anybody But Bush" Bandwagon

New York City
6 May 2004

To *Workers Vanguard*:

The short polemic against the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and the RCP-backed Not In Our Name (NION) in the article titled "International Communist League in Worldwide Protests" from *Workers Vanguard* No. 824 (16 April) could very easily be misinterpreted. The section of note reads as follows:

> "The RCP/NION claims to oppose the 'electoral black hole,' yet as the Spartacus Youth Club pointed out in a polemical leaflet directed to the RCP at March 20 protests, they call for 'more than a million people in the streets of NYC at the time of the Republican National Convention to say NO to the whole Bush agenda!'"

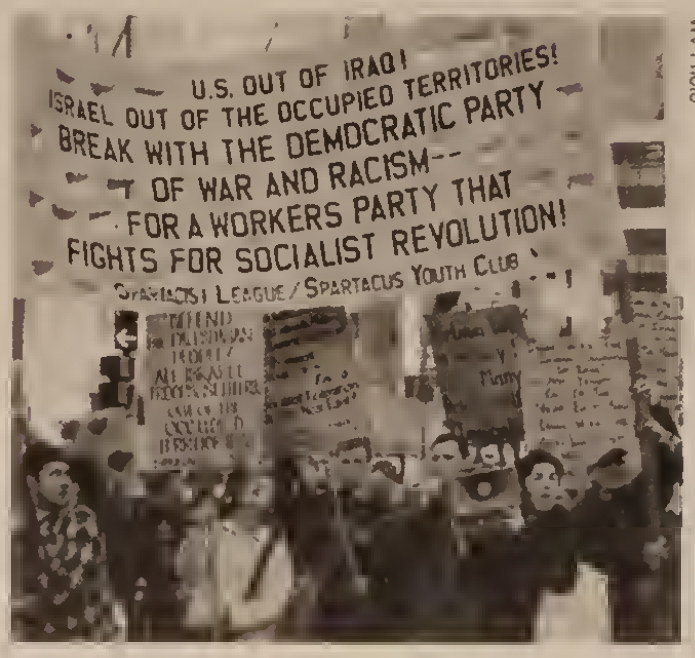
This section is indeed taken from the very fine leaflet directed to the RCP, reprinted in the *Workers Vanguard* of 2 April. However, the leaflet puts the RCP's call into context. Certainly there is nothing wrong with protesting Bush and saying "NO" to his agenda—doing such does not necessarily mean that one is for the "electoral black hole." However, communists would similarly want to say "NO" to the whole Kerry agenda, and, might I mention, the whole Nader agenda. Differences that exist between each policy (often slight) are simply disagreements over the best way to defend the interests of the American *bourgeoisie*—in other words, it is *in every case* directed squarely against the working class and the oppressed the world over.

At the March 20 New York protest against the occupation of Iraq sponsored in part by NION, Dennis Kucinich was a featured speaker and the NION contingent looked like a Kucinich support group, brandishing campaign stickers and buttons. Kucinich spoke in front of a banner reading "The World Still Says No to War!" Fake socialists do their biggest disservice to honest activists in the antiwar movement by stating that someone who actively defends the capitalist system like Kucinich or Nader could genuinely have a program against war. Then-Trotskyist James Burnham (under the pseudonym John West) put it best in *War and the Workers* (1936):

> "To suppose...that revolutionists can work out a common 'program against war' with non-revolutionists is a fatal illusion. Any organization based upon such a program is not merely powerless to prevent war; in practice it acts to promote war, both because it serves in its own way to uphold the system that breeds war, and because it diverts the attention of its members from the real fight against war."

The RCP's program of promoting the false possibility that the Democrats can be pressured/won to take the side of the workers, justified with the call to "unite with all who can be united," proves that, despite their anti-electoral rhetoric, the RCP actually *builds* the "electoral black hole."

Comradely,
E. Abramovitch



WV Photo

March 20: SL/SYC contingent at Chicago anti-occupation rally raised call to break with Democratic Party.

TROTSKY

LENIN

The State: Instrument of Class Repression

The 1917 Russian Revolution brought the working class of that country to power, establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the article excerpted below, which he subsequently expanded into the 1918 polemical pamphlet against German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, *Lenin described how the bourgeois state—even the most democratic—is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and needs to be replaced with a workers state, pointing to the experience of the young Russian workers republic.*

Kautsky has renounced Marxism by forgetting that *every* state is a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and that the most *democratic* bourgeois republic is a machine for the oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletarian state, which is a machine for the suppression ***of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat***, is not a "form of governing," but a ***state of a different type***. Suppression is necessary because the bourgeoisie will always furiously resist being expropriated....

Bourgeois democracy, which is invaluable in educating the proletariat and training it for the struggle, is always narrow, hypocritical, spurious and false; it always remains democracy for the rich and a swindle for the poor.

Proletarian democracy suppresses the exploiters, the bourgeoisie—and is therefore not hypocritical, ***does not promise them*** freedom and democracy—and gives the working people ***genuine democracy***. Only Soviet Russia has given the proletariat and the whole vast labouring majority of Russia a ***freedom and democracy*** unprecedented, impossible and inconceivable in any bourgeois democratic republic, by, for example, taking the palaces and mansions away from the bourgeoisie (without which freedom of assembly is sheer hypocrisy), by taking the print-shops and stocks of paper away from the capitalists (without which freedom of the press for the nation's labouring majority is a lie), and by replacing bourgeois parliamentarism by the democratic organisation of the *Soviets, which are a thousand times* nearer to the people and more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois parliament.

—V.I. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" (1918)

On March 20 London Protest

London
20 April 2004

Dear *WV*,

I was surprised to see the sentence in the *Workers Vanguard* article "International Communist League in Worldwide Protests" (*WV* No. 824, 16 April) that reads: "In London's Trafalgar Square, Labour 'left' Jeremy Corbyn said that Labour prime minister Tony Blair's right-wing domestic agenda was dictated by the U.S., underlining the dominant theme of ***English nationalism***" (my emphasis).

A demonstration today that was dominated by English nationalism would be in support of the occupation of Iraq and the attendant imperialist slaughter, not, in any muted or refracted sense, opposed to it. There were, to my memory, no Union Jacks or St. George's Crosses on display at the demonstration—the presence of which, for one thing, would certainly have deterred many Muslims, blacks, Irish, Scottish or Welsh from participating. Rather, there were a few common themes from the speakers at the end-of-march rally in Trafalgar Square, which were in general characterised by ***little England nationalism*** and anti-Americanism.

In short, this meant that the "little Englanders" who spoke in the main clothed in pacifistic or antiwar rhetoric their opinion that Britain's (i.e., British imperialism's) interests would be best served by ending the historic alliance with the U.S. Many people also partake of this worldview as a misguided form of opposition to U.S. imperialism. Jeremy Corbyn was one of the many speakers who held up the example of Spain as a country where a pro-American government had been thrown out (in favour of the Zapatero government, which sees Spain's interests as aligned with the European imperialist powers). Obviously such a perspective has nothing to do with proletarian, internationalist opposition to British imperialism.

Comradely,
Edward W.

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Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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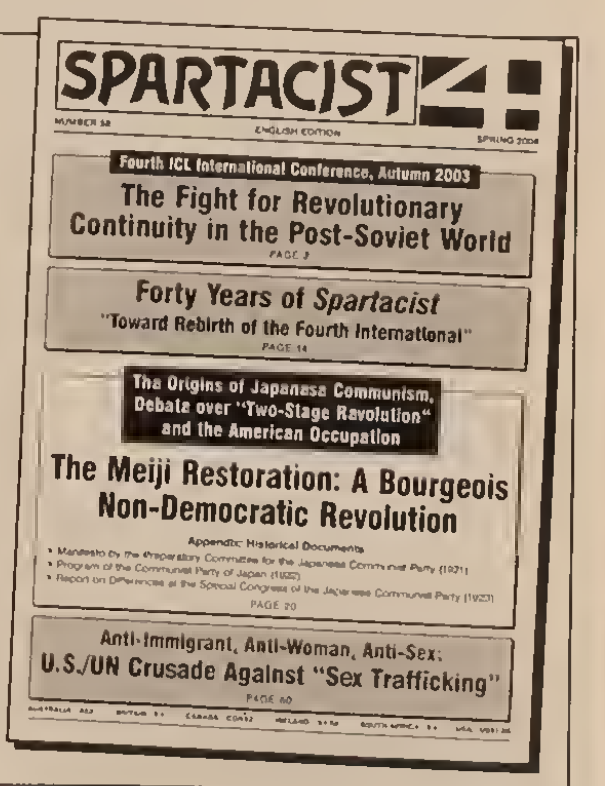
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From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

In the Shadows of Abu Ghraib Prison

The color photos coming out of the dreaded Abu Ghraib prison on Baghdad's outskirts are racing around the world, silent yet eloquent testament to what Americans really think about the people they allegedly came here to "liberate."

The photos, especially in the age of the internet, are racing through the Arab and Muslim world, and showing a side of the American character that seldom gets to be seen, especially abroad.

The photos of naked Arab men, some posed with laughing, jeering US women, is the height of humiliation, and tells everyone who can see, that Americans hold the Iraqis, and by extension, other Arabs, in utter contempt.

"This is not America," a politician huffs.

"I am appalled!," yet another exclaims.

Yet, what is truly appalling, and perhaps more chilling than the naked, human pyramids shown, is the sheer glee shown in the faces of the Americans.

The photos flashed in British tabloids, of soldiers urinating—pissing!—on naked Iraqis, tells the same baleful tale.

These are the actions of contempt, hatred, disrespect—and conquest.

Are the Americans and the British liberators or occupiers?

One need look no further than the faces in the photos of Abu Ghraib for the answer.

When speaking recently with Emory Douglas, the celebrated former Minister of Culture of the Black Panther Party, and chief graphic artist of its famed newspaper, *The Black Panther*, Emory brought to mind an image that is almost lost in history.

He reminded me of a police raid on the West Philadelphia offices of the Black Panther Party, on August 31, 1970, when the police, armed with automatic weapons, stripped men in the streets.

I also thought of the infamous Charles Stuart case, from Boston, when a white man claimed a Black man killed his wife. The cops descended on Roxbury, Black Boston like a plague. They stripped men in the streets of Beantown.

Many of the Americans working in the prisons of Iraq, especially in the reserves, are cops or prison guards in their civilian lives. Indeed, one of the men identified as a suspect in the brutal mistreatment of people in Abu Ghraib, indeed a corporal in the Army, works here, at SCI-Greene!

The horrific treatment of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib has its dark precedents in the prisons and police stations across America.

Journalist Seymour Hersh, of *The New Yorker* magazine, has alleged that there have been cases of sodomy against Iraqis there at Abu Ghraib, and even killing. Does the name Abner Louima ring a bell?

If you hate someone; if you disrespect them; if you fear them, how can you "liberate" them?

As we have said from the very beginning, the Iraq Adventure is not, and never has been, about "liberating" an oppressed people. Indeed, a recent CNN/USA Today poll suggests Iraqis have come to that conclusion, with 71% stating Americans are "occupiers."

Americans may call it "liberation," but they are bringing torture, humiliation, and domination.

Nor are these events the work of people who are "untrained," "poorly trained," or the always useful, "bad apples."

As we have suggested above, many of those who are there in Iraq, and hundreds of the people working in Abu Ghraib prison, were reserves, and came from jobs as prison guards and cops in civilian life. They are perhaps better trained than the average M.P.

Don't buy it.

It is somehow fitting that these depraved acts have happened in one of the most dreadful gulags of the Hussein regime; it shows the continuity of torture and terror.

Now, let us prepare for the inevitable whitewash.

Those of us who know history are certain—it is sure to come.

3 May 2004

©2004 Mumia Abu-Jamal

Send urgently needed contributions for Jamal's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" and earmarked for "Mumia" to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Supreme Court Turns Down Jamal Appeal

Free Mumia Now!

On May 17, the U.S. Supreme Court turned down death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal's petition for a writ of certiorari (review). Filed in March by Jamal's attorney, Robert Bryan, the petition sought to overturn last October's Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision upholding Jamal's conviction and death sentence.

Still pending in the federal courts is Jamal's application for *habeas corpus* relief. Over two years ago, federal district court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal's death sentence while affirming the conviction, condemning him to a life of prison hell. Jamal's attorneys appealed that decision, seeking to overturn the conviction. The state appealed as well, seeking to uphold Jamal's death sentence. With this latest Supreme Court denial, Jamal's case goes back to the federal appeals court to rule on those appeals.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! His case is a textbook example of a classic racist political frame-up. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal had been a target of the Philadelphia police and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15. An award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless" and a supporter of the predominantly black, back-to-nature MOVE organization, Jamal continues to speak out from death row, in commentaries carried in *WV* and other papers across the country, condemning racist cop atrocities, denouncing imperialist war and voicing his support for the battles of striking workers.

Nearly 150 years after the infamous Dred Scott decision, a fighter for black freedom like Jamal has no rights which the capitalist courts are bound to respect. For nearly three years both Pennsylvania state courts and federal courts have refused to even consider testimony from Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Officer Faulkner. As raised in Jamal's Supreme Court petition, these courts have rejected as well evidence discovered only two years ago of the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried. In that conversation, Judge Sabo, who sentenced Jamal to death, declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n----r."

The second ground cited by Mumia's petition is the refusal of Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice Ronald Castille to recuse himself from participating in that court's deliberations and last year's decision denying post-conviction relief (PCRA) to Jamal. As Philadelphia District Attorney from 1986 to 1991, Castille was in charge of the state's successful effort to uphold Jamal's conviction and death sentence. He went on to become a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, where he joined in turning down Jamal's appeal of Sabo's denial of his PCRA in 1997. Jamal's petition highlighted, "For the same person to function as both prosecutor and judge in a capital case violates the due process clause and mandates that the conviction be reversed."

As we wrote at the time the papers were filed ("New Papers Filed in U.S. Supreme Court: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" *WV* No. 822, 19 March): "These papers describe courts where even the formal distinction between judge and prosecutor is totally obliterated; where the trial judge blithely pronounces his racist animus toward Jamal; where one of Jamal's key prosecutors becomes one of the appellate judges who rules on whether Mumia is to live or die. They paint a picture of courts more commonly associated with those of the Deep South of the Jim Crow era."

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq.

We seek to mobilize working people, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in protest actions centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand Jamal's freedom. Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the bourgeois state, with its cops and courts, is not some "neutral" agency that serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit. To put a final halt to the grisly workings of capitalism's machinery of death—be they the guardians of death row or the cops who operate as "judge, jury and executioner" in gunning down minority youth on the street—requires sweeping away this entire system based on exploitation and oppression. The social power to do that lies in the hands of the multiracial working class, with its numbers, organization and discipline—and most importantly its capacity to bring the wheels of the profit system to a grinding halt. ***Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now! Abolish the racist death penalty!*** ■

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

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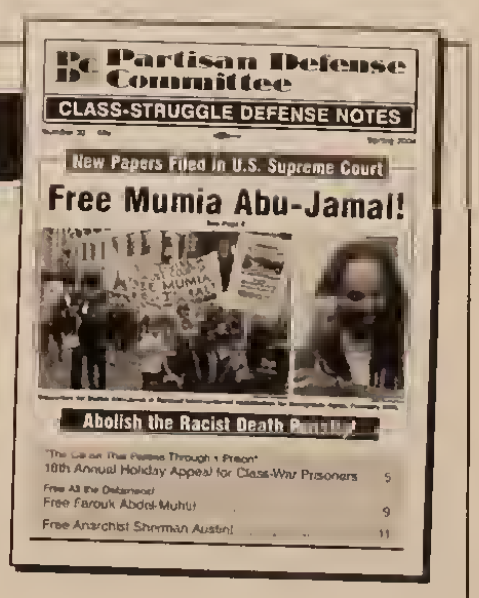


Bolshevik Tendency:

Kneeling Before the Body of General Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham

Toronto
12 March 2004

To the editor:

The 5 March 2004 issue of Workers Vanguard (WV) contains a useful report on the recent "hot cargoing" of parts shipped on Canadian National (CN) trains by members of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) at Ford's Southern Ontario plants in Oakville, St. Thomas and Windsor. They took this action in solidarity with their fellow CAW members who are on strike against CN. The 24 February issue of the union's Railfax wrote: "Special thanks go out to CAW auto workers who placed themselves at risk yesterday in order to support their striking brothers and sisters at CN Rail." As WV correctly observed, these courageous unionists "showed the kind of militant solidarity that's needed to win labor's battles." The capitalist media has largely ignored this action, presumably because they don't want any repetitions.

The same issue of Railfax also reported that, "CN moved over the weekend to secure injunctions in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal." These injunctions were aimed at crippling the strike, but at least in Montreal the workers took no notice. According to a 5 March report on the Montreal website of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (montreal.cbc.ca) 75 CAW pickets blocked the entrance to the rail yards in St. Laurent for several hours and prevented trucks from entering. Eventually the riot squad appeared and attacked the workers, one of whom complained: "We have a right to go on strike, we have the right to be here, but the police are beating the shit out of us to make sure that we leave."

The fact that militant workers in both English Canada and Quebec have been prepared to defy bourgeois legality in the course of this strike seems to us a good reason for you to reconsider the proposition that: "The recognition by the workers of each nation that their respective capitalist rulers—not each other—are the enemy can only come through an independent Quebec" (Spartacist Canada, September-October 1995). The fact is that the current CN strike fits the same pattern of joint struggle by Anglo Canadian and Quebecois workers that we have seen in strikes by rail, postal and civil service workers over the past several decades. There is no question that the Anglo-chauvinism, social-democratic reformism and petty-bourgeois Quebec nationalism pushed by the labor bureaucrats represent important obstacles to the development of a class-conscious workers' movement and must be vigorously combated. But the fact is, the current rail strike parallels previous ones (including the one featured on the front page of WV No. 28, 14 September 1973) in that workers on both sides of the national divide are engaged in common struggle against a common enemy.

As you know, we uphold the position initially developed by the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) in the mid-1970s in contradistinction to various ostensibly Trotskyist organizations which invested petty-bourgeois Quebecois nationalism with some inherently revolutionary dynamic. The iSt position combined a resolute defense of the inalienable right of the Quebecois to separate and form their own state with an advocacy of common working-class struggle across national lines. Contrary to the allegations of the Pabloites, there was no shred of Anglo-chauvinism in this position. The current rail strike demonstrates that the perspective of bi-national class struggle remains a valid one.

As we sought to explain in Trotskyist Bulletin No. 7, the link between the historically more militant Quebecois working class and their English-Canadian sisters and brothers (and through them the powerful U.S. proletariat) is a potentially highly significant factor in the development of revolutionary consciousness within the North American working class. We urge the comrades of the International Communist League, on the basis of this most recent experience, to reassess your organization's position and reject the pessimistic estimation that joint class struggle is not possible prior to the establishment of an independent capitalist Quebec.

Bolshevik Greetings,
J. Decker,
for the International
Bolshevik Tendency

***WV* replies:**

Since its creation more than 20 years ago by a handful of embittered ex-members, the group now calling itself the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) has reviled our organization as a maniacal "political bandit obedience cult." Just a couple of months before we received the above letter, the BT's German adherents came out with an issue of their occasional press, *Bolschewik* (January 2004), which was heavily devoted to regurgitating the BT's slander of the International Communist League and our German section, the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD), for "vulgar chauvinism" against the Kurds. Now the Canadian BT sends us this oh-so-comradely letter addressing us as serious socialists. The BT has two—counterposed—lines on the ICL. This is an acute and grotesque contradiction.

The BT salutes *Workers Vanguard* for its coverage of actions taken by members of the Canadian Auto Workers. Because workers in both English Canada and Quebec have engaged in struggle, the BT beseeches us to "reconsider" our position and join them in ***opposing independence*** for Quebec. No thanks. We leave to the BT the distinction of being ***the*** "socialists" officially invited to a Montreal "Canadian unity" rally on the eve of a 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty. It's no accident the BT was invited to this "We love Canada" rally organized by top business leaders—because the BT's leaflet on the referendum (issued only in English!) also called on Quebec workers to vote No to independence. When the BT's only Québécois member quit, he protested their "de facto bloc with the Canadian bourgeoisie."

The BT glibly claims to uphold our initial position combining "resolute defense of the inalienable right of the Quebecois to separate and form their own state with an advocacy of common working-class struggle across national lines." Hardly. In the first ten years of its existence, the BT wrote all of ***one sentence*** about Quebec (and we really had to hunt for it!). In contrast, from its very beginnings our Canadian section, the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, ***actively championed*** Quebec's right to independence.

However, by 1995 we recognized that it had become necessary not only to defend Quebec's right to secede but to ***advocate*** its independence. We concluded that our previous perception—that national antagonisms had not yet become so intense as to make independence the only means of cutting through them—was "at best based on a superficial appreciation of the evolution of a self-conscious Quebec nation and the class struggle within it." This reappraisal was the result of extensive international discussion, study and our experience of intervention in the struggles of the working class in Quebec and English Canada. A motion adopted by the Central Committee of the TL/LT in July of that year noted:

> "For Leninists, the advocacy of an independent Quebec is the means to get this question 'off the agenda,' particularly to combat the orgy of Anglo chauvinism in English Canada, but also to foil the aims of the bourgeois nationalists in Quebec who seek to tie the historically combative Québécois proletariat to their coattails. This is the only road to bringing to the fore the real social contradictions between the working class and their 'own' bourgeoisie in either nation, and thereby laying a genuine basis for common class struggle in the future."

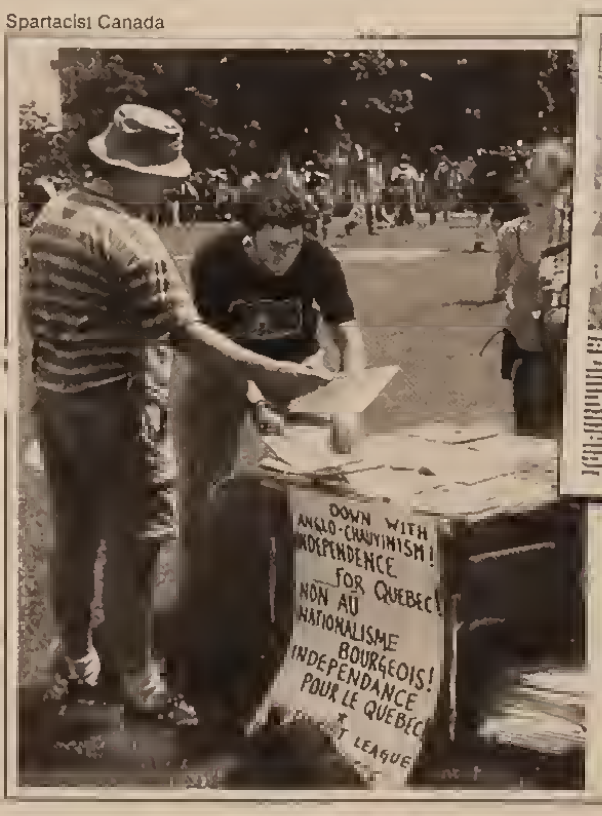
We recognized that if we had not changed our position we would have been finished as a Marxist organization in Canada. But the BT was never premised on the Marxist fight to win the proletariat to the cause of international socialist revolution. Its arid appeals to "bi-national class struggle" are merely an echo of the Anglo-chauvinist union bureaucrats who also argue that independence for Quebec would be harmful to "labor solidarity."

From the BT's letter, one would have

WV Photo

Bill Logan (inset). Below: General Wolfe, British commander in Canada during French and Indian War, lies dying after 1759 battle on Quebec's Plains of Abraham that clinched British domination over Canada.

detail of painting by Benjamin West



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no idea that the CN strike occurred amid the biggest outburst of anti-Québécois chauvinism in the last 15 years. This in turn is fueling a predictable rise in pro-independence sentiment in Quebec, with polls showing support for sovereignty back up to 47 percent. Most Quebec unions are quite separate from those in English Canada. Even the CN strike—one of all too few examples of common labor struggle—testified to the depths of the national divide: in English Canada, picket lines were festooned with the Maple Leaf flag; in Quebec, with the *fleur-de-lys*.

The ruling Liberals' funneling of millions in government funds to friendly advertising agencies in Quebec has produced an uproar in English Canada. When New York TV talk show host Conan O'Brien brought his *Late Night* show to Toronto, the mere mention of the word "Quebec" brought a chorus of boos from the audience. The tabloid *Toronto Sun* made a virtual anthem of O'Brien's sick "joke"—"You're French and Canadian? Then you must be obnoxious and dumb!"—after it elicited guffaws of approval from his studio audience. In Quebec, anglophones in bourgeois Westmount and the middle-class suburbs on Montreal's West Island are agitating to withdraw from the largely French-speaking city and re-establish separate, privileged enclaves. Recent revelations that the federal government was ready to send troops to Quebec if the 1995 sovereignty referendum had carried underline again how the forcible retention of Quebec in a "united" country is a cornerstone of capitalist Canada (see "Anglo-Chauvinist Provocations on the Rise: Independence for Quebec!" *Spartacist Canada* No. 139, Winter 2003/2004). The BT makes no mention of any of this.

Maclean's

Chauvinist 1995 "Canadian unity" rally in Montreal, which BT was officially invited to attend.

A *Persilschein* for the Father Confessor?

One can assume from the BT's letter that they are sufficiently concerned that we have caught them out on their Maple Leaf chauvinism as to sense they cannot approach us as a deranged cult over the Quebec question without inflicting further damage to themselves. On the other hand, their German branch continues the BT's slander campaign against us for "great power chauvinism" supposedly directed against the Kurds, with some new embellishments as absurd as they are disgusting. Run under a large picture of cops arresting a Kurdish protester in Berlin, their chauvinist-baiting diatribe is designed to convey a not-so-subtle amalgam between our comrades and the racist oppressors of the Kurds. Particularly in a country with a large Kurdish population, this is a blatant appeal that we should be dealt with as enemies of the Kurdish people. And this poison is spewed by an outfit that stridently ***opposes*** the Kurds' exercise of their right to self-determination in an independent Kurdistan and whose own revolting indifference to the oppression of the Kurdish people is captured in its headline, "Polemics with SpAD/ICL: With Love from Absurdistan."

We already shredded this chauvinist-baiting Big Lie last year, documenting the BT's role as a walking provocation against the ICL and exposing the manipulative sociopath, Bill Logan, it embraces as its leader (see "BT: Renegades for Hire," *WV* No. 807, 1 August 2003 and "BT: A Walking Provocation," *WV* No. 808, 29 August 2003). We do so not simply for purposes of elementary political sanitation, but because a new generation of leftists must be made aware that the likes of Logan have no place in the workers movement. It was for similar reasons that we took the unusual step of publicly releasing our three internal bulletins "On the Logan Regime" after we expelled him from our international organization (then the international Spartacist tendency) in 1979.

In late 1978, there was a fight to remove Logan as national chairman of our British section, where he had been running a brutal and nasty regime. The exposure of Logan's sadistic manipulation of comrades in Britain led to further charges against him from his former victims in the more isolated Australian section. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand Central Committee charged Logan "with systematic and conscious violations of communist morality during his tenure as national chairman of the SLANZ between the years of 1972 and 1977" and "with repeated, conscious intervention into comrades' personal lives as part of a pattern of calculated personal and sexual manipulation, passing off intimate managing of comrades' personal lives as a legitimate and central function of the national chairman" (see "On the Logan Regime Part III," *International Information Bulletin* No. 16, November 1983). The charges itemized 18 specific counts, including six attempts "to bring about certain sexual configurations and/or create couples through direct intervention" and three attempts "to break up certain couples through organisational/personal pressure and administrative measures." Finally, Logan was charged with "The campaign to force Vicky A to get an abortion and failing that, to foster her child (1973), using personal, social and organisational pressure."

Following a trial at our First International Conference in 1979, Logan was expelled by a unanimous vote—including those future BT members present—as a "proven, massive liar and a sexual sociopath who manipulated the private lives of comrades for reasons of power politics and his own aberrant appetites and compulsions in the guise of Marxism." In the case of Vicky A., the trial body found Logan "guilty of inhuman torture of a mother, rendered suicidal in his attempt to destroy and take away her baby."

These credentials were good enough for those who formed the BT, having drihhled out of our party in flight from our hard Soviet-defensist communist politics in the face of renewed Cold War in the early 1980s, to embrace the same Logan they had earlier voted to expel. In 1990, Logan (who had resurfaced as head of the New Zealand Permanent Revolution Group) emerged quite openly as the *lider maximo* of what was now proclaimed to be an "international" tendency. Last summer, nearly ***25 years*** after we had expelled Logan, the BT came up with a quote ripped entirely out of context from one of our publicly available internal bulletins to slander us for "vulgar chauvinism."

The quote was taken from a 1978 report by SL/U.S. National Chairman James Robertson, a founder of our international tendency, to our New York local on the fight to remove the Logan regime in Britain. In his report, Robertson criticized another leading comrade, Reuben Samuels, for absenting himself from this fight: "Criticism of Reuben: the whole time, where was Reuben? He was off in the library, studying about the Turds for his class." Samuels had been brought to Britain to give an educational on the Kurdish question at the urging of comrade Robertson and the rest of our international leadership, a task of particular importance at the time given the recruitment of Turkish comrades to our British section. But when Samuels got to London what was posed was not a class but a hard political fight to defend our party against Logan, who viciously manipulated the internalized oppression of minority and women comrades. Samuels was later flown back to Britain a second time to give his class on the fight against Kurdish oppression—some chauvinism!

More than a hundred opinionated, argumentative young communists of many different ethnic backgrounds heard Robertson's presentation. They understood it for what it was: a powerful indictment of the all-sided oppression of capitalist class society, and a record of the struggle against a sick character who tried to destroy comrades. In ripping apart the BT's attempt to paint our membership as merely obedient tools, fools and perhaps racists themselves, we noted of the BT's lies: "They can't manage to mention that the quotation from comrade Robertson that they pulled out and twisted beyond recognition comes from a bulletin titled 'On the Logan Regime Part I.' How come? Why has Logan become the equivalent of that empty space on retouched photos? What is the BT hiding?" (*WV* No. 807, 1 August 2003).

Evidently, the BT left it to their German section to produce the requisite *Persilschein* (the "De-Nazification Certificate" issued to "rehabilitated" Third Reich war criminals at the end of World War II) for Logan. To this end, the German group dredges up some garbage alibis for Logan that had been gathering dust in a 1996 BT pamphlet titled *ICL vs. IBT* (which pamphlet coincidentally got posted on the BT's Web site in June 2003, just as it launched its latest smear campaign against us). Logan was just following orders, pleads the article in *Bolschewik*, claiming that he simply made "political mistakes...fully within the norms of the iSt in other places":

> "Everywhere in the iSt women were pressured not to have children. The leadership of the iSt, including James Robertson himself, let it be known that women who had children were, in his opinion, on their way out of politics. It was thus standard in the iSt to pressure women to decide against children and for the party. Nothing else happened in the SL/ANZ under Bill Logan."

This is a lie as breathtaking as it is grotesque. The norm in ***our*** party, well known to Logan, was expressed in an exchange published in a 1972 SL/U.S. preconference bulletin (*Internal Discussion Bulletin* No. 20, "Comradely Greetings to the Delegates of the Third National Conference of the SL/US (and to comrades Bill, Adaire, Joel and Gene who are away)," November 1972). Responding to a misplaced concern by a prospective recruit over whether parents can function as disciplined communists, a woman comrade wrote: "I can think of no examples among the parent-comrades in the SL (there are several) myself included, who are parents first and communists second.... If a comrade (with a child) is carrying out the work required of party membership his contribution is as meaningful as anyone else's." She added, "It's not the party's job to monitor personal relationships." This was very much ***not*** the norm under Logan in Australia.

At the very meeting in New York where Robertson gave his report on the fight against Logan in Britain, a comrade who had returned some time earlier from a year as treasurer in our Australian section gave some sense of what would soon come out about Logan's tenure in Australia. She recalled how horrified she was to learn that the Logan regime had devised financial rules that allowed deductions from party contributions for a vasectomy but not for the upkeep of a child. "In short," she recounted, "without

continued on page 11

Special ICL Bulletins

On the Logan Regime

(Three parts)

In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate human decency." Logan is now the leader of the "International Bolshevik Tendency." As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available.

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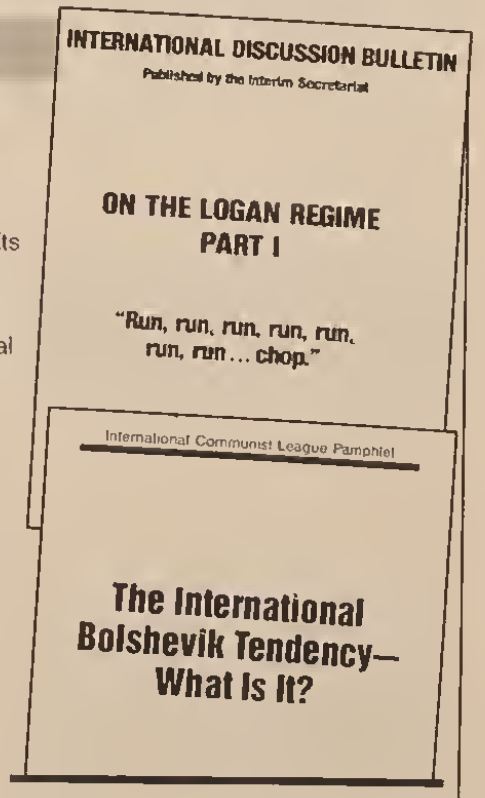

Young Spartacus

Protest Grisly Murder of UNAM Activist!

We reprint below the statement issued on May 11 by the Juventud Espartaquista, youth group of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.

Mexico City

After having disappeared on April 19, one day before the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the UNAM [National Autonomous University] strike, the body of student and activist Noel Pável González was found hanging from a cross near the Ajusco mountain area on April 23. On his lifeless body were several injuries, signs of torture and rape and a skull fracture inflicted by his depraved murderers on the first day of his disappearance. According to students from the National School of Anthropology and History, as well as his parents and workers at UNAM, "the [murder and torture] were carried out by a group specializing in torture which calls to mind the worst periods of the ***dirty war*** and leads us to think of a new process of annihilation of social activists" (*La Jornada*, 26 April). We Spartacists solidarize with his family, friends and comrades in the face of this heinous crime.

Pável was an activist during the student strike of 1999-2000 at UNAM, as a member of the Strike Committee at CCH-Sur high school. More recently, he was pursuing a major both in Latin American Studies in the School of Philosophy and Letters at UNAM and in Social Anthropology at the National School of Anthropology and History, in addition to being a member of the Zapatista coffee cooperative, Smaliyel. The murder of Pável takes place in the context of a lull in the student movement, the expulsion of student activists and the emboldening of groups of right-wing thugs at UNAM. This cowardly and vile act has the characteristics of a political crime. On April 26, only three days after Pável's body was found, members of the Department of Latin American Studies, the Cerezo Commitee, the FARC Support Commitee and various students from the School of Philosophy and Letters received a repugnant e-mail, with a return address that made a reference to the ultra-rightist group El Yunque (The Anvil) and also mentioned the thug group Apocalipsis (Apocalypse), threatening them with more acts of violence if they continued with their activities. Following this were other threats made to students by phone and e-mail (Indymedia México, 4 May).

Indymedia

April 29 march in Mexico City demanding an explanation of murder of Pável González. Poster for rally in his honor reads: "March Against the Dirty War."

The criminal violence against the left did not stop there. According to witnesses, on the evening of May 7, Rodolfo Hernández Gómez fired a gun pointblank at activists who were in favor of free and public education: Mayra Claudia Valenzuela, student at the National Pedagogic University and José Luis Cordero and Noé Lucio Becerril from the National School of Social Work. Activists reported that during the elections at the School of Social Work, the director of the school, Carlos Arteaga, had threatened with expulsion several activists who were opposed to his re-election. Rodolfo Hernández, who had repeatedly expressed his support to the university authorities, arrived at the site with five other thugs armed with sticks and chains ("Stop the Aggression Against UNAM Students!", Internet leaflet by LTS-CC, undated). Likewise, eyewitnesses state that authorities from the School of Social Work helped Hernández and his gang of thugs escape after the attack was perpetrated (*La Jornada*, 9 May). Conspicuously, Hernández's whereabouts are currently unknown. The three activists remain in the hospital and in critical condition. We send them our fraternal greetings and hope for a quick recovery.

The brutal murder of Pável, as well as the attempted murder of the three activists at the School of Social Work, are a blow against all the left and a threat to its very physical existence. The Juventud Espartaquista condemns and protests these criminal attacks and calls on the workers movement as a whole to join in protest: ***An injury to one is an injury to all!***

The bourgeois state—a murderous machine that looks after the interests of the oppressors—has no interest in punishing the torturers and murderers of Pável or stopping the gangs of thugs that the authorities use as auxiliaries for keeping down leftist political dissidents. We Spartacists fight to mobilize the power of the working class in defense of activists and all the oppressed and to win students to the fight for proletarian revolution, the only way to end the repression and brutality inherent to capitalism once and for all.■

Nader...

(continued from page 12)

were UN-enforced. Nader's position didn't start in Iraq—thus even the ISO was "disgusted" when his initial response to the Afghanistan war was simply that "If we're gonna do what we're gonna do, we should do it in a very constitutional way" (*Socialist Worker*, 19 October 2001).

Back in 2000, SAlt actually attempted to put into practice their scheme to build a "workers party"—which is their justification for this charade—out of the rubble of Naderism. In December, as the 2000 presidential election fiasco came to a close, they whined, "Unfortunately, Nader is attempting to channel the broad momentum generated into the narrow confines of the Green Party." They continued: "Socialist Alternative is calling on Ralph Nader to help convene national, local and regional conferences of all organizations and forces that supported his campaign with the aim of creating a broad working class party" (*Justice*, December 2000-January 2001). Of course, this enemy of the working class—one who spit on the unionization drive at his own magazine shop—did no such thing.

So where did the "movement" around Nader go? Into pro-Democratic Party rallies to get Gore into office following the contested presidential elections. Today, many of his most prominent supporters, including some of the editors of the liberal *Nation* magazine, have urged him ***not*** to run and "spoil" the chances of the Democrats. It's not surprising that Nader supporters returned to the Democrats because in many ways they never left in the first place; they sought to pressure the Dems to be nicer, but not at the expense of having a Republican in the White House. Telling those who seek genuine social change to put their money down on a capitalist candidate like Nader can only breed demoralization and profound cynicism when such campaigns inevitably fail to bring social progress. No matter which politicians are elected, the capitalist state exists for the maintenance of the profit system.

Der Spiegel

True face of UN "peacekeeping": Demonstrators gunned down in street by UN troops in Somalia, 1993. Nader calls for UN troops to occupy Iraq.

Back in 2000, SAlt crowed about how they had initiated campaigns for Nader (at times against the wishes of the local Greens, who knew better than they how little Nader and "socialism" had in common). SAlt even bashed the ISO for their strategy of playing it safe and only joining the campaign once it was clear it was popular. This time, the ISO may well be able to gloat about SAlt's failure in selling Nader to the radical liberal youth.

The road toward social progress lies not in preaching to the workers that they should trust some wing of the capitalist class, but in imbuing the working class with the understanding that it must organize independently and for its own interests. We fight to build a workers party on the Bolshevik model that will raise class consciousness and ultimately lead the workers to state power through a socialist revolution. This party will not be forged through cheap tricks and electoral maneuvers but through real class struggle: strikes, massive social protest, events that pit the working class against the bosses.■

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Open Letter to Columbia GSEU

Union Tops Betray, Halt Strike at Behest of Democrats

On May 14, the nearly month-long strike by Graduate Student Employees United (GSEU) to win union recognition from the union-busting Columbia University administration was put on "hiatus" at the insistence of the GSEU/United Auto Workers Local 2110 union tops. The union leadership was acting on a request from two Democratic Party politicians, the New York City Council speaker Gifford Miller and New York state senate minority leader David Paterson, who advanced an empty offer to mediate the conflict in exchange for a halt to the strike. Frequently posturing as "friends of labor," the Democratic Party in fact variously works to contain, quell and suppress class and social struggle. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy and its president John Sweeney, who spoke at a GSEU strike support rally on April 28, preach reliance on the Democratic Party, chaining workers to the capitalists and their state. In this election year, the Democrats are attempting to reclaim the imperial U.S. presidency so that John Kerry can call the shots in the brutal colonial occupation of Iraq and anti-immigrant, anti-labor "war on terror." The Spartacus Youth Club argued to shut Columbia down, intervening at union events and on the picket lines with our revolutionary, class-struggle program throughout the GSEU strike (see "Columbia Graduate Students Battle Union-Busting Administration," *WV* No. 826, 14 May). We reprint below a May 21 open letter written by an SYC supporter to the membership of the GSEU.

* * *

I am writing this letter to object in the strongest possible terms to the abject surrender to the university that is being euphemistically called a "strike hiatus." Hardly a "hiatus," the vote on Friday gave Columbia its graders, its commencement, and a status quo more or less identical to that of mid-April.

The Spartacus Youth Club rightly argued from the outset that the strike would not be won through shaming the university, through reliance on Democratic Party politicians, or through the oxymoron of the "porous picket line." The union tried to keep things "respectable," so respectable in fact that all the Democrats had to do was ask for an end to the strike for the administration to win.

And who are these Democrats, anyway? A bunch of machine politician bottom-feeders who look on the union ranks as voting cattle for a capitalist party that has signed on to the war on Iraq, that backs the slave-labor Taylor Law here in New York. The only thing these "allies" (!) have given GSEU is exactly the same seemingly interminable deadlock that faced us on April 18. I joined the GSEU when it first started organizing on campus in order to get a graduate student union at Columbia, *not* to become a cog in the Democratic Party.

The union can break the administration, but it has to wage the sort of fight it consciously avoided in the strike. It has to shut down the campus. It has to make systematic attempts to block deliveries and call on students to boycott classes. The university *functioned* throughout our strike, brothers and sisters. The Columbia administration weathered it. The union needs the broad support of campus labor and the student body to win, not just in words, but in deeds. The union will not win by coddling scabs and unduly worrying about causing offense to strikebreakers, but by broadening its fight among its real allies. The UAW 2110 support staff's one-day sympathy strike was a welcome step in the right direction, but it was only a step. If the union refuses to fight the university with tenacity and with every means at its disposal, it is accepting defeat in advance. Our bosses at Columbia love it when we play by their rules.

To my knowledge, there has been no attempt to fight the university's moves to dock the pay of sympathy strikers. In addition, Angie Sanders, a member of the SSA [Support Staff Association] up at Health Sciences, has lost her job for holding to a basic pro-labor position: You don't go to work in a struck shop. Many members know Angie from her frequent presence at our picket lines. We should demand Angie's reinstatement.

Strikes are won on the picket lines, not in the courtrooms or at City Hall. GSEU should, by whatever possible means, defend its *real* allies, our brothers and sisters, from the administration against which we have struggled for years.

Fraternally,
Quincy Lehr

Young Spartacus

Union leadership courted Democrats like New York state assemblyman Scott Stringer, speaking at Columbia strike rally, May 14.

Marcus Dixon Freed!

On May 3, the Georgia Supreme Court overturned the May 2003 conviction for aggravated child molestation against Marcus Dixon by a four-to-three vote. A black high school football star from Rome, Georgia, Dixon had a 3.96 GPA and a scholarship to attend Vanderbilt University in the fall of 2003. We welcome the freeing of Dixon, but this cannot make up for the injustice he has suffered. He never should have seen the inside of a jail—not for one day, much less one year. He never should have been hauled before a court or had his life so cruelly disrupted.

Marcus Dixon is free, but his future is still in doubt. The county D.A. who secured his original conviction says she intends to get the Georgia Supreme Court decision overturned. Vanderbilt, which revoked his scholarship upon his conviction, has as of yet not offered to reverse that decision—and a second conviction of statutory rape Dixon received for the same incident remains on his record. *Hands off Marcus Dixon!*

AP

Dixon, 18 at the time of his arrest, had sex with a 15-year-old white girl. The young woman, reportedly fearing repercussions from her racist father, accused Dixon of rape. In the course of the trial, it became clear that the sex in question had been consensual. But the D.A., playing on the explosive intersection of race and sex that cuts to the quick of racist America, railroaded Dixon into a mandatory ten-year sentence under one of the "seven deadly sins" in Georgia law: aggravated child molestation. This law defines "child molestation" as any sex act occurring in which one party is over 16 years of age and one under.

At least some jurors from Dixon's trial were shocked at the severity of the sentence and said they would not have convicted him had they known the consequences. "I can honestly say, and talk for the other ten jurors, that we had no intention of sending him to prison for ten years," said juror Robert Williamson. "We were sure he would go home that day" (CBSNews.com, 19 January).

The legacy of slavery clings to the South. Georgia only took its anti-miscegenation law banning interracial sex off the books in 1972 and only abolished its "fornication" law—which banned all extramarital sex and was historically used against interracial couples—in 2003. Allegations of black men raping white women—overwhelmingly spurious—were a frequent pretext for lynchings as well as for legal repression of black people up to the racist death penalty. Dixon's story attracted national attention. The NAACP held a 1,000-strong rally at the Georgia State Capitol on March 1 to demand Dixon's freedom. But the Democrats, to whom the NAACP looks for justice, bear no small degree of culpability. For example, black Democrat Tyrone Brooks co-sponsored the law under which Dixon was sentenced (see "Free Marcus Dixon!" *WV* No. 819, 6 February).

We oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws. Far from protecting youth in a racist, class-based society, such laws give the capitalist state yet another means to socially regiment the population. We say that who sleeps with whom is none of the government's business. The defining guideline of sexual relations should be that of effective consent.

Marcus Dixon did nothing wrong, nothing that teenagers across the country don't do all the time. But he fell afoul of a racist order that unleashes terror in the ghettos and transforms increasingly segregated urban schools into virtual prisons. Marcus Dixon's case, even now that he is out of prison, shows how fragile democratic rights can be under capitalism. Only by shattering the capitalist order through a workers revolution will the sort of racist repression meted out to Dixon be relegated to a barbaric past.■

Protest Cop Repression Against Anti-DNC Activists!

As America's twin parties of capital gear up to nominate their candidates for U.S. imperialist Commander in Chief later this summer, the state has increasingly moved to clamp down on planned protests outside both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions (DNC/RNC). In the Boston area, cops already are rounding up "suspected anarchists" as the local bourgeois media whip up bogus "anti-terror" hysteria over anti-DNC protesters. On April 14, eight activists were arrested by the Cambridge police while planting flowers on an abandoned property, and six face trumped-up felony charges of breaking and entering and possession of tools for burglary. Among those arrested was a member of the Bl(A)ck Tea Society, a coalition of liberal and anarchist groups organizing the anti-DNC protests; in the first week of May, a Bl(A)ck Tea Society meeting on the MIT campus was shut down by the police. Meanwhile in New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his cronies have denied the liberal United for Peace and Justice coalition a protest permit outside the RNC for August 29, the day of mass worldwide protest against the "Bush agenda." We reprint below a May 17 Partisan Defense Committee letter to MIT president Charles M. Vest protesting the cop repression against anti-DNC activists.

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee strongly protests MIT's assault on the basic civil liberties of the Bl(A)ck Tea Society. On Wednesday, May 5, 2004, MIT campus security and armed Cambridge police officers (one of which illegally refused to identify himself) physically prevented a meeting of the Bl(A)ck Tea Society from taking place in their legitimately reserved room. We are told that this reprehensible infringement of constitutional rights occurred at the behest of Democratic Party frontrunner John Kerry's Secret Service.

This attack takes place in the context of the bipartisan-USA-Patriot Act's bogus "war on terror" and heightened police surveillance and harassment of Boston activists in the lead-up to the Democratic National Convention—including draconian restrictions on march and rally permits and the infiltration of the Bl(A)ck Tea Society's February 13-15 meeting [in Boston] by the New York police. We demand an end to this pattern of harassment and intimidation.■

War on Terror...

(continued from page 1)

U.S. Court of Appeals in New York. Our brief argues that this case "tests the very existence of the fundamental rights and privileges of citizenship embodied in the Bill of Rights and secured on the battlefield of the Civil War and in class and social struggle over the past hundred and more years. If the imperial President is upheld, Padilla's detention threatens to become the *Dred Scott* case of our time, a declaration that 'Citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect'."

Born in Brooklyn of Puerto Rican background, Padilla grew up in Chicago and as a young man converted to Islam, changed his name to Ibrahim and moved to Egypt, where he now has a wife and two children. In May 2002 he was traveling back to Chicago to visit his family, but was seized at the airport on vague claims that he is associated with Al Qaeda, and involved in a "plot" to detonate a "dirty bomb" in the U.S. No charges have been presented against Padilla, and government officials have admitted that it is a "weak case." Yet Padilla has been denied any ability to challenge his detention, and has not been allowed to see a lawyer since he's been in military detention except for one visit a month ago, with military brass watching and taping the whole discussion so that no confidential legal defense could be discussed.

Meanwhile, as the *New York Times* (13 May) reported, Padilla's name was extracted under "intensive questioning" (a euphemism for torture) of a man captured by the CIA. Authorized "intensive questioning" techniques include strapping down a prisoner and pushing him underwater until he nearly drowns. As the *Times* noted, "These techniques were authorized by a set of secret rules...that were endorsed by the Justice Department and the C.I.A. The rules were among the first adopted by the Bush administration after the Sept. 11 attacks for handling detainees and may have helped establish a new understanding throughout the government that officials would have greater freedom to deal harshly with detainees."

Another extremely ominous case brought by the government seeks to shut down free speech, using the USA-Patriot Act, which was passed with bipartisan support after the September 11 attacks. Sami Omar al-Hussayen, the father of three children, has been in prison for over a year. He is a doctoral candidate in computer science at the University of Idaho, where he led a candlelight vigil the night of September 11 to condemn the World Trade Center attack. Now al-Hussayen, a leader of the university's Muslim Student Association, is accused of "terrorism" based *solely* on the fact that he set up some Islam-oriented Internet Web sites and e-mail discussion groups on which people posted arguments for—and against—"jihad." It is not even clear, or relevant in the government's view, whether al-Hussayen even knew these postings were being made.

Such attempts to prove guilt by Internet association could target anyone who ever logged on to any site with any link to anything, whether the content is known or not. The USA-Patriot omnibus witchhunting act outlaws "material support" to "terrorists," but this "crime" is so vaguely defined that it could include giving money to a bake sale to fund health clinics in Turkey or Sri Lanka, if the recipients were affiliated with groups such as the Kurdistan Workers Party or the Tamil Tigers, both designated "terrorist" by the U.S. government. The U.S. government's "terrorist" label is to be applied as broadly as suits its nefarious purposes.

Reuters

May 12: Iraqi women demonstrate outside Abu Ghraib prison, desperate for information on imprisoned relatives.

"War on Terror": Phony War

The SL and PDC's brief on behalf of Jose Padilla to the Supreme Court argues, "It is in fact no war by any military definition. There is no shooting war and no battle between state powers. The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil." With the Soviet Union gone, the U.S. rulers had to invent a new enemy to replace the fight against "godless communism." As U.S. vice president Cheney said, "When America's great enemy suddenly disappeared, many wondered what new direction our foreign policy would take.... The threat is known and our role is clear now" (*New York Review of Books*, 26 September 2002). The new bogeyman was international "terrorism."

That the "war" is only a pretext was vividly exposed during the April 20 Guantánamo argument, when Solicitor General Theodore Olson, in response to a question from Justice John Paul Stevens, acknowledged that "the existence of the war is really irrelevant to the legal issue." According to Olson, the government would deny the detainees access to the courts even if "the war had ended."

If the administration has its way, it would eviscerate 200 years of American constitutional law giving the courts judicial oversight of executive branch decisions. Our legal brief argued, "The Executive asserts that it has the unchallengeable authority to decide who is a terrorist and subject such persons to martial law, demanding absolute and complete deference by the judiciary. This demand of unfettered power by the Executive is a move toward bonapartism, a police state, and requiring a compliant judiciary." The war against terrorism literally means the right to assassinate anyone, anywhere, including in the United States. Our brief states, "Following the Executive's own logic, Padilla could have been shot to death in the Chicago O'Hare airport, just as well as being taken into custody."

Even members of the Supreme Court were taken aback by the Bush administration's assertion of sweeping executive power. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg asked, referring to the torture or shooting of detainees, "What inhibits that if the law is what the executive says it is?" Only a day or two later, the hideous tortures at Abu Ghraib became public knowledge.

Snapshots of Domestic Repression

Padilla's lawyer told the Supreme Court that the administration's efforts to impose martial law on a U.S. citizen would be okay—if only Congress passed a law allowing it! "Were this court to rule that Congressional action was required," she added, "I have no doubt that Congress would step into the breach very quickly to provide whatever authorization the executive branch deemed necessary" (*New York Times*, 29 April). The SL and PDC *amici* brief argued just the opposite point, that "more fundamentally, *Congress is no more empowered than the Executive* to order that citizens be disappeared without due process of law" (emphasis added).

The capitalist politicians, Democrat and Republican, in Congress have their own long history of authorizing the detention of leftists, immigrants and ethnic minorities in times of war. In 1942, when Democratic president Franklin Roosevelt issued his notorious order to imprison Japanese Americans in concentration camps for the duration of World War II, Congress immediately ratified that order. In the late 1940s and early 1950s Congress spearheaded the McCarthyite witchhunt, including passing the Internal Security Act which created an elaborate system for registering "subversive" organizations and deporting immigrants found to have been Communists at any time in their lives.

The 1950 Emergency Detention Act also provided for detention of suspected "subversives" in "times of emergency." The government's roundup lists of "subversives" included *nearly 30,000 people!* In 1983 the FBI's Domestic Security/Terrorism Guidelines falsely implied that the Spartacist League was a terrorist organization. We fought back, sued the FBI and won, forcing the FBI to acknowledge that Marxist advocacy cannot be equated with violence or terrorism. We said at the time that we had no illusions this would stop the dirty tricks and terror for which the U.S. government is known worldwide. Today, the Justice Department has a new "criminal information" database called Matrix, whose developers sold it based on a list of 120,000 people with a "high terrorism factor"—a purely speculative list which, however, the government "apparently acted on," according to the *New York Times* (21 May).

Although the government has primarily aimed its fire at Muslims and immigrants, the ultimate targets of the U.S.'s attempted detention measures will be the multiracial labor movement and black people. Ominously, in justifying its right to disappear Padilla, the government has cited the 1909 case called *Moyer v. Peabody*, involving the governor of Colorado's declaration that a miners strike for the eight-hour day was an "insurrection." Some 400 miners were forcibly deported from the state, and over 175 miners were thrown in local jails, includ-

Victory!
Charges Dropped Against Port Protesters

OAKLAND—On April 22, an Alameda County judge dismissed all criminal charges against the Oakland 25, victims of last year's police rampage against antiwar protesters and longshoremen at the Port of Oakland in California. At the 7 April 2003 protest, in a premeditated attack planned by port bosses and the Oakland police, riot-equipped cops fired wooden bullets and concussion grenades at picketers protesting the "war merchants at the Oakland docks." Among the dozens of those injured were nine longshoremen and many leftists, including supporters of the Spartacist League; the 31 arrests included ILWU Local 10 business agent Jack Heyman, who was jailed for trying to protect his union members.

The Partisan Defense Committee issued an immediate call to "Drop all the charges!" (reprinted in *WV* No. 801, 11 April 2003). Statements of protest were sent by unions from around the world, including Italian dockworkers, the Brazilian labor federation CUT and the All Japan Dockworkers' Union. This violent police assault on antiwar protesters was even cited by the United Nations Human Rights Commission. While the city dragged the case out for months, unionists (including longshoremen from Charleston, South Carolina), leftists and civil libertarians rallied at the courthouse to show their support for the Oakland 25. The main Bay Area labor councils also protested the attack and turned out in defense. This solid defense led to the victory.

Jakob Schiller

Protester wounded by police attack on antiwar demonstration at Port of Oakland, 7 April 2003.

A civil case brought against the city and the police department by the ILWU and many of those injured in the assault is still pending, asking for monetary damages and an injunction to restrain the police from future "excessive, indiscriminate and/or arbitrary force." It wasn't until just before this class-action lawsuit was filed last June that the city vindictively pressed charges against 25 of those arrested on April 7. The Spartacist League stands in solidarity with those who have brought the suit, but we warn against illusions in police-reform schemes. As our spokesman said at the 7 November 2003 courthouse rally, "The police are the armed force of the capitalist state, and the state is not a neutral body and cannot be made to do right by the workers and oppressed, no matter how much pressure we try to put on it." It's labor's enormous social power that must be brought to bear now to stop the hideous slaughter and torture inflicted on the Iraqi people by the bloody U.S. colonial war and occupation of Iraq.

Workers Vanguard thanks its readers for their support to this important case.

Gaza...

(continued from page 1)

Amira Hass noted in *Ha'aretz* (19 May), "Merchants invented the system. The tunnels are not only for weapons and drugs, but for medicine, basic food commodities and cigarettes, at prices much more suitable for poverty-stricken Rafah."

The images of Palestinians in Gaza looking for belongings in their demolished homes drove Yosef Lapid, *the justice minister in Sharon's own government*, to declare, "I saw on television an old woman picking through the rubble of her house in Rafah, looking for her medicine, and she reminded me of my grandmother who was expelled from her home during the Holocaust" (*Financial Times*, 24 May). Needless to say, Sharon immediately denounced these remarks as "unacceptable and intolerable."

Meanwhile, the building of the apartheid wall in the West Bank is moving apace, carving up the West Bank into isolated Palestinian enclaves while grabbing up whole chunks of the West Bank for the more than 200,000 settlers there. Israel's rulers are making life unbearable for the Palestinians so as to force out those who can leave while suffocating the rest. ***Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now!***

The day of the Rafah massacre, the U.S. rulers switched from their more typical veto to abstention on the ritual United Nations Security Council vote to condemn Israel's actions. Bush and company are facing international outrage in response to the horrendous torture and killings at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison. On the same day as the UN vote, Iraqi officials announced that the U.S. military had butchered over 40 people at a wedding party in western Iraq. In April Bush publicly promised Sharon that he would support Israel's West Bank land grab if Israel gave up Gaza. Continued Zionist atrocities in Gaza are troublesome for the U.S. imperialists' plans for the Near East.

For decades, Israel has received nearly uncritical support from U.S. imperialism, the main enemy of working people and the oppressed across the world. From some $5 billion a year in loans and grants to direct military aid—including the fighter jets and helicopters that fire on Palestinian civilians—U.S. imperialism has armed the Zionist state to the hilt. ***Down with U.S. aid to Israel! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! U.S. troops out now!***

The Palestinians are caught in a truly terrible vise—while facing the relentless onslaught of the Zionist military and its settler auxiliaries, they have been utterly betrayed by the bankruptcy of the secular-nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), especially with the signing of the treacherous Oslo accords in 1993. It is under such circumstances that thoroughly reactionary religious obscurantist groups like Hamas have gained widespread support among Palestinians, particularly in the Gaza Strip. The proliferation of the criminal suicide bombings that have cost the lives of hundreds of Israeli civilians is a measure of the increasing hopelessness that the Palestinians feel.

In the 1980s, Israel encouraged the growth of the anti-Jewish fundamentalist outfit Hamas as a counterweight to the secular-nationalist PLO of Arafat. Now, the Zionist rulers are carrying out systematic assassinations of top Hamas leaders, like the March 22 killing of "spiritual leader" Ahmed Yassin and the assassination of his replacement, Abdel Aziz Rantisi, three weeks later. And the threats against Yasir Arafat's life continue unabated. Israel's rulers have long had a policy of targeting Palestinian leaders of any stripe.

On May 20, an Israeli court convicted Palestinian leader Marwan Barghouti of being responsible for the murder of five Israeli civilians through directing Palestinian terror attacks. He is to be sentenced next month and faces up to life in prison. Barghouti—a prominent Palestinian who supported the Oslo accords and was viewed as a potential successor to Arafat—has steadfastly denied any involvement with any of the attacks against Israeli civilians, emphasizing that he is a Palestinian political leader. The arrest and imprisonment of Barghouti is an attack on all Palestinians, smearing any resistance to the Israeli occupation as "terrorism." We demand Barghouti's freedom and the freedom of all Palestinians indiscriminately rounded up by the Zionist state.

The Palestinian masses have nowhere to turn within the limits of decaying imperialist capitalism. The national liberation of the Palestinians is intertwined with the fate of the Hebrew-speaking people—two interpenetrated populations that lay claim to the same small piece of land. The right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew and Palestinian peoples can only be secured through the struggle for Arab/Hebrew workers revolutions and the building of a socialist federation of the Near East. It will not be easy to break the Hebrew proletariat from Zionism. But it is the task of revolutionaries to use every means to split the working class of Israel from the Zionist rulers.

Notably, some 500 Israelis protested on May 19 and 20 against the Rafah massacre, calling for an immediate withdrawal from Gaza; eight demonstrators were arrested. Any cracks in the Israeli fortress state are welcome to those who want to fight for the national liberation of the Palestinian people. What is most urgently posed is the construction of internationalist working-class parties, sections of a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all manner of religious fundamentalism. This is the task to which the International Communist League is committed.■

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ing union leader Charles Moyer, who was held as a military prisoner for three months. In response to a petition for *habeas corpus*, militia general Sherman Bell declared, "*Habeas corpus*, hell! We'll give 'em post mortems."

What the government can get away with will be determined by class and social struggle. The rights of citizenship and other civil liberties that the government is trying to shred are the products of generations of revolutionary class struggle, including Cromwell's struggle against the Crown in the English Civil War, the American Revolution and the bloody Civil War that overthrew slavery. The McCarthy-era "anti-subversive" detention laws were repealed in 1969 as the result of the Vietnam antiwar movement and the massive civil rights struggles which rocked this country.

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

With the U.S. occupation of Iraq turning into a political nightmare for the Bush administration, increasing numbers of Americans are disaffected from the war and especially bitter about the lies that led to it. The bloody spectacle of U.S. troops firing on Muslim holy sites in Karbala and Najaf, the revelations of widespread killing and torture of helpless prisoners, must horrify and nauseate anyone not utterly poisoned by racist imperialist arrogance. The U.S. media and Congressional investigations play up the prosecution of low-level Abu Ghraib guards for the real purpose of the propaganda war: to hide the mass murder of civilians carried out by the U.S. in Iraq; as the London *Independent* (23 May) headlines, "Ordinary Iraqis Killed: 11,500 and Not Counting." For a generation just coming to political consciousness—one that did not directly experience a full-scale, long drawn out U.S. imperialist war, like Vietnam—this is an eye-opener into the realities of the export of "democracy."

WV Photo

Oakland, 9 February 2002: PDC-initiated labor-centered mobilization in opposition to Patriot Act, in defense of immigrant rights.

The point that has to be driven home is that these people—the U.S. ruling class—*knew exactly what they were doing* when they set up the torture camps. Such places are the necessary creations of imperialist policy, as we pointed out in "U.S. Torture, Inc." (*WV* No. 826, 14 May). Since then a host of journalistic exposés prove the torture policy goes all the way to the top of the government. Seymour Hersh's *New Yorker* article "The Gray Zone" (24 May) gets right to the point in its opening sentence: "The roots of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal lie not in the criminal inclinations of a few Army reservists but in a decision, approved last year by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, to expand a highly secret operation, which had been focussed on the hunt for Al Qaeda, to the interrogation of prisoners in Iraq." Interrogation techniques included "physical coercion and sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners," as Hersh noted.

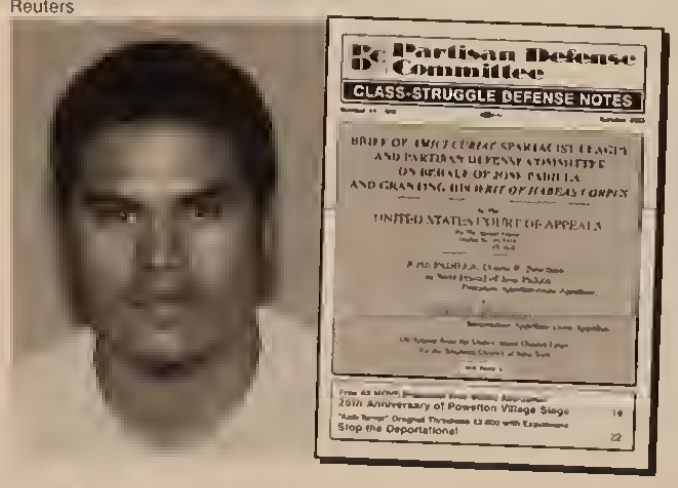
As the neocons' crazed dream of a quick victory on the cheap in Iraq collapsed in bloody chaos, the brutal torture increased: Major General Miller, who oversaw the Guantánamo hellhole detention center, was sent into Abu Ghraib, first to implement the torture program, and then later, when it looked like it was going to spiral out of control, to take direct charge. "His job is to save what he can," one of Hersh's "former intelligence official" sources said. "He's there to protect the program while limiting any loss of core capability."

The Spartacist League forthrightly states that every blow against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world. We take a side against the U.S. imperialist occupation without giving an ounce of political support to the reactionary clerics who appear to be leading much of the resistance. The key to defeating the U.S. occupation of Iraq is *class struggle at home*. What impedes this is not a shortage of discontent but the Democratic Party-loyal labor leadership and the reformist left.

While numerous trade unions have passed resolutions against the Patriot Act, paper tigers can't defeat the government's rampage. What's urgently necessary is militant class struggle in defense of labor's right to strike, in defense of immigrants and all the oppressed. The ILWU longshore union leadership, for instance, is mobilizing double the number of union organizers to get out the vote for Democratic Party hopeful John Kerry than it mobilized to galvanize labor support for the ILWU when it was locked out last year. It is precisely through the subordination of the labor movement to the Democratic Party that the trade-union tops shackle the working class to the capitalist rulers. The shredding of civil liberties by the Bush gang was prepared by the Clinton administration, with, for instance, the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (for a full assessment of how the Democrats primed the pump, see "Lies, Repression and Imperialist War," *WV* No. 825, 30 April). Bush just had September 11 as his "godsend" to ram through a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. This year, from the "home front" to Iraq, John Kerry and the Democrats are running as the more responsible, efficacious and popular party of war and repression.

Opponents of U.S. Torture, Inc. in Iraq and the shredding of civil liberties at home must be won to the understanding that this social system based on the exploitation of labor for the profit of the capitalist class cannot be reformed. No number of peace crawls bleating "money for jobs, not for war" will change the priorities of imperialism. And the backhanded support to Democrat John Kerry pushed by even ostensible socialists pandering to the "anybody but Bush" sentiment is a recipe to perpetuate the whole system of capitalist rule, racism and war. Here in the heart of U.S. imperialism, the working class has a key task: to bring down the rapacious U.S. ruling class, which will enormously strengthen workers and the oppressed in every corner of the globe. The Spartacist League fights to build the multiracial revolutionary workers party that brings that consciousness to the working class and radical youth. There will be no justice served until *all* the war criminals and commanders, from the Pentagon chiefs and their political bosses to their underlings, are swept from power through a proletarian socialist revolution.■

Reuters



***Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 31 reprints friend of the court brief filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals by PDC and SL in defense of Jose Padilla (left). Order for $.50 from: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.**

Down With Anti-Sex Witchhunt in Britain!

The article below was published in the Young Spartacus *pages of* Workers Hammer *No. 186 (Winter 2003-2004), newspaper of the Spartacist League/ Britain.*

WORKERS HAMMER

Last November, Blair, Blunkett and their cohorts in the Labour Party, in league with the anti-sex bigots across the parliamentary benches, passed the Sexual Offences Act (2003) which outlaws even *kissing* involving under-16s. In its subsection on "child sex offences," the Act makes anything that can be deemed as "sexual touching" illegal where one or both participants are under 16. The penalty is up to five years in prison! So you might be too young to kiss but old enough to be thrown in the slammer!

A much worse fate faces those of 18 years or over caught kissing or sexually touching a lover under the age of 16. The courts have the power to incarcerate such an "offender" for up to 14 years! For the "crime" of sexual intercourse or oral sex with an under-16, again *regardless* of consent, a person over 18 can expect to face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment! The Act also criminalises those who allow under-16s to be in the presence of or to watch a sexual act. So parents you'd better lock your doors and while you're at it, you'd better not allow your kid to have sex at home since those who "facilitate" underage sex are also branded as criminal "offenders."

With monumental hypocrisy this legislation was passed in the name of "child protection," which is truly twisted coming from a Labour government that has administered the murder of hundreds of thousands of children through its filthy imperialist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Serbia. This is the same government that continues the oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland today under the facade of the "peace" deal, where fascistic loyalist thugs terrorise little Catholic schoolgirls such as those of Holy Cross school. This is the government that in the name of the "war on terror" steps up the persecution of immigrants, threatening to take away and incarcerate children if their parents do not agree to deportation. But never mind this murder and terror. What the Labour government makes out to be the big evil threat facing children and youth is...sex! The party that created the "New Deal" with its pitiful pay and conditions for youth, that slashed benefits and introduced fees for higher education, that governs over one of the wealthiest countries in the world where a third of the child population lives in poverty, warns about the "danger" of youth receiving any form of sexual pleasure that may provide some comfort from the pain of this rotten society.

This draconian legislation with its creation of new crimes and extension of punishments regarding "child sex offences" is part of Labour's wholesale attack on democratic rights and augmentation of the powers of the state, its cops, courts and prisons. There have been twelve new "Criminal Justice" bills since Labour came to power in 1997, with 700 new offences being added for which one can be imprisoned. Under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 the state has the legal power to detain individuals indefinitely without public trial, while the new Civil Contingencies Bill gives the government the authority to do practically anything it wants in a situation it deems to be an "emergency." As we wrote in "Anti-terror laws target immigrants, workers—Down with Labour's racist witch hunt!" (*Workers Hammer* No. 185, Autumn 2003): "The intent of these augmented police powers is to regiment the population, to accustom people to the restriction of democratic rights, to accept ID checks and surveillance as 'normal,' to create a climate of fear aimed at quashing in advance any social and political struggle."

"New" Labour—Deranged Puritans on the Loose

Blair's "New" Labour government threw itself into an anti-sex witch hunt upon coming to power with legislation passed in its first term that extended police monitoring of former and even suspected "sex offenders," requiring them to be part of a "police register" for life. During the summer of 2000 reactionary "anti-paedophile" mobs rampaged throughout Britain, following the notorious *News of the World*'s "name and shame" campaign, terrorising those on the paper's hit list of "suspected paedophiles," and even ludicrously targeting a woman paediatrician. In October 2003 judges were told by the Attorney General and the Court of Appeal to toughen up their senteneing of child "sex offenders" in particular.

The big scare story of recent years has been the use of the Internet by "paedophiles." Amidst lurid stories of paedophiles using chatrooms to lure children for "grooming," police are hunting down people who merely download pornography featuring children. Aecording to the police they are tracking some 7,300 such "suspeets"! Such hysteria was cleverly captured by Channel 4's satire *Brass Eye* in a mock special on paedophilia in July 2001. In one sequence Lahour MP Barbara Follett, seriously thinking the show to be sincere, read a warning off an auto-cue about the danger of a computer game used by "paedophiles." Follett sanctimoniously intoned: "In this shot, Pantou the dog has told the boy to press his face on to the screen. Online paedophiles use special gloves to feel and palpate the child's face." For such satire the programme received 1,500 complaints, making it one of the most controversial programmes ever broadcast on British TV, this in itself a demonstration of the extent of the frenzy.

As we wrote at the height of this frenzy (in "Labour's witch hunt against 'sex offenders' unleashes vigilante terror," *Workers Hammer* No. 174, Autumn 2000): "'Paedophilia' simply means sexual desire towards children. To equate this with child murder and rape is grotesque and partakes of the same reactionary bourgeois bigotry which declares all sex other than heterosexual monogamy to be 'deviant'." This capitalist society must deny that children can experience a legitimate sexuality, even though they obviously do. There is no other rationale for age of consent laws. As for child pornography, like any other kind of pornography, whether portraying naked women, young boys or donkeys, it is merely images and words designed for entertainment. One person's turn-on is another person's turn-off—who is going to decide what is "obscene"?

For us the guiding principle for sexual relations should he that of *effective consent*, nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion. *We vehemently oppose state intervention into people's sexual activities, entertainment and private lives. Down with the "age of consent" laws! State out of the bedroom!*

Central to explaining the deranged frenzy over youth having sex with anyone, including even people their own age, much less older, is an understanding of the centrality of the family to the maintenance of capitalist class rule. The family is the key institution for the regimentation of the population, instilling respect for authority and inculcating "obedience" to the moral codes of bourgeois patriarchal society—which, for one, is important for taming the inherently anarchic nature of youth.

The family is the instrument not just for the subjugation of youth but also for women's oppression and is the origin of anti-gay bigotry. For the bourgeoisie the patriarchal subjugation of women in the family is meant to ensure the "rightful" inheritance of property. In working-class families the role of women is to raise the next generation of wage slaves for capitalist exploitation. Like child sexuality, homosexuality represents sexual relations outside the confines of the family structure of one man on top of one woman for life. By the same token attacks on gays, laws banning sex for youth and the witch hunt of "paedophiles" are all aimed at strengthening the family, a horrible straitjacket of violence, misery, guilt and enforced moralism.

The racist, anti-working-class, anti-woman and anti-youth capitalist state has no business legislating people's consensual sexual activity. We recall that the origins of "age of consent" laws are in the days of the "bride-price," guaranteeing a woman's virginity in arranged marriages. We oppose leaving it up to the capitalist state that upholds the oppressive nuclear family and enforces sexual repression, to decide *on behalf* of youth when they are able to engage in sexual activity and with whom.

A Revolutionary Workers Party—Tribune of the People

As a Marxist-Leninist youth group we fight to train and educate the future cadre to build a proletarian revolutionary vanguard party that acts as a tribune of the people. V.I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, described the tasks of the revolutionary vanguard in his book, *What Is To Be Done?* (1902) as follows:

> "[The] Social-Democrat's [Communist's] ideal should [be] ***the tribune of the people***, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth ***before all*** his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for ***all*** and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

We in the International Communist League have proudly taken up the defence of victims of the capitalist state's anti-sex witch hunt. In the U.S., our comrades have fought against the vicious persecution of the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), which the state has attempted to frame up, bankrupt and crush for its courage in opposing "laws that punish consensual relationships" of whatever sexuality and age. In Britain we defended the British Paedophile Information Exchange, whose leaders were jailed in 1984 for advocating the right of youth under the "age of consent" to have sex with adults. ***Down with Labaur's reactiouary "anti-paedophile" campaign!***

Outrageously, other groups who call themselves "socialist" have responded at best with ambivalent passivity and even with outright support to puritanical bigotry and state intervention. The Socialist Party actually endorsed the state's "paedophile register" installed in 1997 and bemoaned cutbacks in the repressive probation and prison services (*Socialism Today*, September 2000). Taking his lead from the "anti-paedophile" scaremongering, the Socialist Workers Party's Paul Foot supported a police operation against child care workers amidst wild accusations that children's homes had been infiltrated by "organised groups of paedophiles" in an article carried by the *London Review of Books* (4 July 1996). More recently, SYG [Spartacus Youth Group] members have been baited by *Socialist Worker* salespeople trying to inflame their own witch hunt against us by screaming that our staunch defence of consensual sexual relations against state persecution is a defence of "child abuse." It is a real statement of their own small-minded backwardness that these organisations end up on the side of bigoted bourgeois morality.

To their credit Revo, the youth affiliate of Workers Power (WP), oppose the "age of consent" laws. But this is pretty cheap when they cannot bring themselves to say a word in opposition to the persecution of adults involved in eonsensual sex with under-16s. Meanwhile their Workers Power parents, while rightly acknowledging that children's sexuality develops at different ages, still manage to give credence to the bourgeois myth that all children are sexless innocents. *Workers Power* (June 1998) declared: "If we rightly recognise that young children generally lack the powers of eomprehension and the skills nccessary for a range of activities then equally we recognise that they cannot give informed consent to sexual activity with an adult." WP goes on to argue that "penetrative sex between adults and pre-pubescent children [is] physically harmful to children" and call for bourgeois state intervention in the form of "protective legislation for children." Obviously things become murkier when you have very young children with adults and the question of effective consent must he looked at on a case by case basis. But even at that, contrary to WP, state legislation has nothing to do with "protecting" children but with strengthening its own consummately violent and oppressive rule.

In contrast, our model is the young Soviet workers state that issued out of the Russian Octoher Revolution of 1917, whose law on sexual affairs was based on "the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters so long as nobody is injured and no one's interests are encroached upon." The purpose of the SYG, youth auxiliary of the Spartacist League/Britain, is to build a party like the Bolsheviks that can lead the working class in a victorious socialist revolution that will destroy the inherently oppressive capitalist state. Such a revolution will open the road to providing the material hasis to *replace* the repressive nuclear family, opening the way to true sexual equality and freedom.■

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BT...

(continued from page 5)

making a membership rule in the organization which said that if you have a baby you'll be expelled, they said if you have a baby you will be driven out because you will not be able to survive."

Again relying on the BT's 1996 pamphlet, the *Bolschewik* article also invokes Edmund Samarakkody, a longtime Sri Lankan Trotskyist with whom we had sought to fuse at the 1979 conference and who served on the trial body, intoning that "Logan never strove for personal advantages—as Edmund Samarakkody confirmed." Jack the Ripper's murder of prostitutes in London didn't bring him any demonstrable "personal advantage" either! While Samarakkody had his own reasons for provoking a break in political relations with us at the 1979 conference, he is not quite the witness for the defense the BT would have him be. In his minority report of the trial body to the conference (also published in "On the Logan Regime Part III"), Samarakkody concluded: "I have not exonerated Logan, that monster. I have placed this monstrosity in the proper context. You can totally disagree with me; you can tear this and put it in the wastepaper basket. But please do not think that I functioned in the trial body as the attorney of that monster."

As befits its arrogant, elitist contempt for the struggles of the oppressed, the BT partakes of a "Great Man" theory of history. According to the BT, it was Robertson who "had decided to topple the Logan regime" ("The Truth Hurts," 8 August 2003 Internet posting). Logan, as a truly Great Man, cannot conceive of having been humbled, humiliated and brought down by anything other than the whim of a supposed "cult leader." The fight in Britain had undermined Logan's grip over the comrades he had tormented in Australia and unleashed a torrent of painful testimony. It was these comrades—largely young and inexperienced but extremely dedicated—who demanded Logan's head.

Even before his expulsion, Logan spread lies to those outside our organization that he had been subjected to threats of violence. In an obituary in the BT's *1917* (1998) on Myra Tanner Weiss, a veteran of the early American Trotskyist movement, Logan is quoted openly admitting that he violated our democratic-centralist discipline while a suspended member awaiting trial. Claiming to perceive "a threat to use physical violence against me after my expulsion," Logan continued, "I broke the discipline of the Spartacist tendency. I looked up Myra in the telephone book, gave her a call, and made arrangements to have a talk with her." Whether Logan was simply being provocative or undergoing paranoid delusions, projecting from his depraved grooving on inflicting misery on others, his imputations of violence could only serve to harm and defame us.

Nor has Logan changed his sadistic spots, as was made clear some years ago when some defectors from the BT and Logan's Permanent Revolution Group (PRG) published materials regarding Logan's practices of "Communist Criticism" in his own New Zealand fief. In the minutes of a 19 January 1993 PRG membership meeting, Logan described this "Com Crit" as putting each member in the "hot seat" in turn, "to be the subject of three rounds of analysis." After ***three days*** of such meetings, an organizer with a child finally resigned, confessing in a 19 February 1993 report to not showing enough "vigour and consistency" because of changed "personal circumstances—I now have a demanding job and also a young baby—and so I have less time for politics" (reproduced in *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League* No. 8, "The Bolshevik Tendency: From the Snake Pit of Anti-Spartacism," July 1993).

Now Logan advertises his services as a professional "counsellor, narrative therapist and celebrant" on his Web site (bl.co.nz). The man who tried to force a young woman communist to have an abortion now provides sample texts for funerals for babies and boasts, "I've done ceremonies for Hindus and atheists, Christians and Buddhists, followers of Khrishnamurthy and Christian Science."

Under the heading "Ceremony & Celebrancy," Logan intones: "Ceremony is important to our lives, from the dinner table to a coronation or presidential inauguration"—perhaps he's angling to be a "celebrant" at the coronation of the next HRH (His/Her Royal Highness). On his Web site, Logan speaks of the "Anglican and Presbyterian influences of my childhood." Far from being inspired by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, Logan does not even look to the left wing of Protestantism during the English Revolution under Oliver Cromwell, but to the Presbyterian right wing and the monarchist Anglicans! That this man is the veritable high priest of a putatively Marxist organization should tell you just about all you need to know about the BT.

Garbage Doesn't Walk by Itself

The BT is not so much a political opponent as a sinister threat of provocation. In 1983, the BT (then calling itself the External Tendency) launched an international campaign labeling us as "violent," lying that we had assaulted one of their members—just as we were engaged in a serious legal fight against the FBI for targeting our organization as "violent"! Some years later (and numerous sinister incidents in between), the *Wall Street Journal* tried to undercut a growing international protest movement in defense of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, using the BT as an authority for smears to depict the Partisan Defense Committee—the central organization that had been fighting for others to take up Jamal's case—as associated with a crazed "cult." The *Journal* (16 June 1995) wrote: "The Spartacists are led by a man named James Robertson, prompting the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of former Spartacists, to deride their old party as 'Jimstown,' a takeoff on Jonestown in Guyana, the jungle site of mass suicide." This mouthpiece for the American ruling class certainly got the point of the BT's lurid smear of our party as an "obedience cult" and its allusion to the notorious 1978 mass suicide by an evangelical religious cult.

The BT's politics, such as they are, are fully in keeping with its hoary "darkness at noon" depiction of our communist organization as a Stalin-style gulag and personality cult. So central and intertwined are social-democratic anti-Communism and a hostile obsession with us to the BT's existence that, by its own admission, the "focal point" of the German group's fusion with the tiny Gruppe Leo Trotzki in 2002 was shared hostility to any possibility of a revolutionary outcome in East Germany in 1989-90 and to the one organization that fought to realize this, the ICL. As hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets of East Germany to demand a genuinely egalitarian socialist society, we mobilized our resources internationally in the effort to provide Trotskyist leadership to that incipient political revolution and to fight for revolutionary reunification—for a red Germany of workers councils. We didn't prevail but we fought!

The BT's "intervention" into those revolutionary events was to smear the ICL as a bureaucratic cult akin to the Stalinists and, in an article headlined "Robertsonites in Wonderland," to sneer that we had invented an "imaginary political revolution" (*1917*, Third Quarter 1991). Only those in thrall to the anti-Communist myth that "Stalinist totalitarianism" had rendered the workers in the bureaucratically deformed workers states mindless automatons incapable of struggle could so blithely dismiss any outcome other than capitalist counterrevolution.

The BT's abiding complaint (retailed again in the latest *Bolschewik*) is that we did not offer to provide a platform for the Social Democratic Party (SPD) at the 250,000-strong united-front protest in East Berlin's Treptow Park on 3 January 1990. That united front, initiated by us and taken up by the ruling Stalinist party, was called to protest the fascist desecration of a memorial to Soviet soldiers who died liberating Germany from Hitler's Nazis and was premised on defense of the workers states. What place did the openly counterrevolutionary SPD have at such a protest?!

More recently, the BT has extended its embrace of counterrevolution to take in not only the German SPD but the CIA's favored "god-king," the Tibetan Dalai Lama, arguing in the latest issue of *1917* (2004): "By agreeing that the Tibetans or Uighur have the right to control their own domestic affairs, a revolutionary government in China would signal its willingness to coexist with Tibet's traditional ruling caste and Xinjiang's mullahs as long as they retain popular support." Where the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy promotes "one country, two systems" in maintaining Hong Kong as a capitalist enclave, the BT goes the extra mile—to "coexist" with feudalism!—or, in other words, "one country, three systems." Such respect for the devotion of benighted peoples to their religious leaders has much in common with images purveyed by apologists for class and race oppression of an earlier era—including reactionary stereotypes of the "humble, devout" French serf before the 1789 French Revolution or the supposedly "carefree, contented" black slave in the U.S. South before the American Civil War.

From Canada to Germany, inasmuch as the BT raises political questions, it reflects the "values" of the ruling class as refracted through its own national social democracy. More provocateur than political opponent, the BT is centrally animated by subjective malice toward our party. As such they are open to anyone's bidding. Their lies and slanders are the weapons of choice for a bitter and vicious gang of renegades. Their purpose is to seal us off from thinking leftists and subjectively revolutionary youth, while giving ammunition to the forces of reaction arrayed against us. The BTs are real political garbage, and as we've said of them many times in the past, garbage doesn't walk by itself.■

WV Photo

As SL and PDC mobilized during worldwide protest campaign to stop execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, capitalists' mouthpiece picked up BT's "cult" smear to vilify Mumia's supporters.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
16 June 1995

Not Much Left: 'The Movement' Is Pretty Still Nowadays

• • •

Despite the GOP Revolution, Radical Groups Can't Win Converts to Their Brand

...led by Angela Davis...
...ner Communist Party USA member...

The Spartacists are led by a man named James Robertson, prompting the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of former Spartacists, to deride their old party as "Jimstown," a takeoff on Jonestown in Guyana, the jungle site of mass suicide.

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Ralph Nader, ISO and Socialist Alternative:
Unsavory at Any Speed

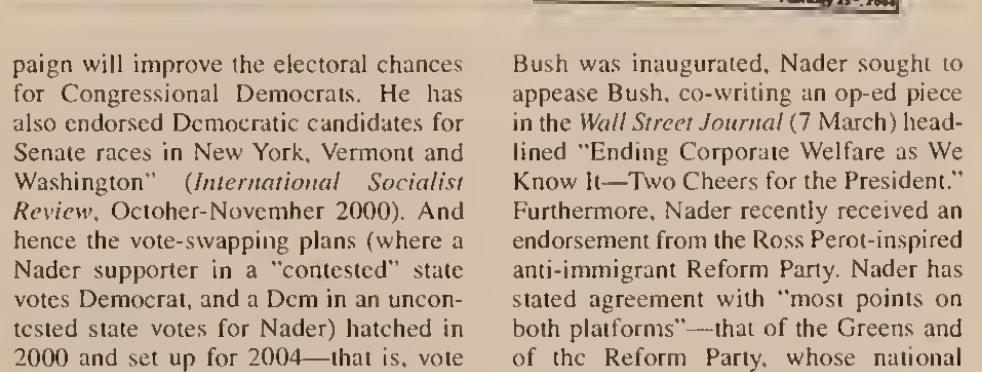
In four years of drooling over Ralph Nader, preaching to the working class that it should place its hopes in a representative of the class enemy, the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and Socialist Alternative (SAlt) prove that they are "socialists" whose politics lead far from socialism. Now SAlt has again called for a vote to Nader, and a debate

Young Spartacus

has unfolded in the pages of the ISO's *Socialist Worker* over whether or not to support him this time.

In 2000, Nader ran as a liberal bourgeois reformer on the Green Party ticket. The stated purpose of his campaign was to revive the Democrats and push them to the left, in his words "to pull them in the right direction" (*LA Weekly*, 30 June 2000). Simultaneously, he spouted protectionist anti-China and anti-Mexico rhetoric about American jobs for American workers and argued that the U.S. didn't go to war soon enough in Serbia. His positions are such because he *defends the capitalist system*. He seeks to refurbish the tarnished image of the bourgeois electoral system and channel those discontented with it back into the fold of the Democratic Party. At the time, the ISO and SAlt both endorsed Nader; we said: "*Break with the Democrats! No support to the Greens! Build a revolutionary workers party to fight for socialist revolution!*" (*WV* No. 739, 28 July 2000).

By lending "socialist" credence to Nader's mission, the ISO and SAlt act as *obstacles* to raising the consciousness necessary to mobilize workers in their own interest against America's racist rulers. These phony socialists fawned over Nader last time, desperately rushing to prove themselves as his best campaign builders in the name of bolstering the "new radicalization." While complaining about pro-Democratic Party "lesser evilism," they simply took up a call for the *lesser* lesser evil. And now a letter to *Socialist Worker* (5 March) worries that in his 2004 bid, "Nader talked about helping Democrats recapture the House of Representatives in 'key swing districts'." But Nader talked about that in 2000 too. Even the ISO wrote at the time that "he also expresses hope that his campaign will improve the electoral chances for Congressional Democrats. He has also endorsed Democratic candidates for Senate races in New York, Vermont and Washington" (*International Socialist Review*, October-November 2000). And hence the vote-swapping plans (where a Nader supporter in a "contested" state votes Democrat, and a Dem in an uncontested state votes for Nader) hatched in 2000 and set up for 2004—that is, vote Nader and still help the Dems win!



AP

Nader meets with Democrat John Kerry, May 19. While ISO debates support to Nader, SAlt campaigns for vote to bourgeois candidate who seeks alliance with Kerry.

Even the ISO admits that Nader has recently campaigned on platforms with Dennis Kucinich. In fact, Nader postponed his decision to run until it was clear that Kucinich would not receive the Democratic Party nomination. Why? Because the differences between Kucinich and Nader are not fundamental but *tactical*—Nader wants to reform the Democratic Party from the outside; Kucinich wants to do it from within. Nader made this link between himself and the Dems even clearer last week when he met with John Kerry. He reported of the meeting that "I told him of my belief that I would take more votes away from Bush than from him" (Associated Press, 19 May). In other words, Nader is offering himself as a tool for Kerry's election campaign. While these recent moves may be more explicit than in 2000, they directly flow from the same reform-the-Dems platform Nader put forward then.

Now, the ISO has "discovered" Nader's populist appeals to conservatives. He is guilty of what they admit and more. As far back as 2001, shortly after George W. Bush was inaugurated, Nader sought to appease Bush, co-writing an op-ed piece in the *Wall Street Journal* (7 March) headlined "Ending Corporate Welfare as We Know It—Two Cheers for the President." Furthermore, Nader recently received an endorsement from the Ross Perot-inspired anti-immigrant Reform Party. Nader has stated agreement with "most points on both platforms"—that of the Greens and of the Reform Party, whose national chairman stated is "sick and tired of this country being flooded by immigrants" (*Hartford Courant*, 3 April). Nader even went so far as to praise Perot's "undeniable patriotism" (www.voteNader.org, 26 February). However, the ISO seems to have been too busy distributing campaign flyers in 2000 to notice when a Reform Party splinter group supported Nader that year.

We suspect the real reason for the ISO's trepidation over Nader has less to do with any change on his part, and more to do with the shifting winds of liberal (and reformist leftist) opinion, which today howl for "Anybody but Bush." As the ISO put it: "Aside from these political considerations, there's the concrete question of how prominent Nader can be in this election" (*Socialist Worker*, 27 February). Their perspective in 2000 was that no matter how bad Nader is himself, "If socialists and activists use Nader's election bid to build a strong campaign on the campuses, communities, and in the unions, not only will we be able to maximize Nader's vote, but we will have taken an important step toward rebuilding a fighting left wing—and yes, a socialist—movement in this country" (*International Socialist Review*, October-November 2000). To talk of building a "movement" that could advance the cause of workers and the oppressed based on a capitalist politician, as the ISO and SAlt both do, is the antithesis of Marxism and a cynical hoax!

The truth is that these "socialists" will back almost anything—even if it is completely the opposite of their purported beliefs—just to gain popularity. And what if Nader is more widely embraced in 2004? Well, the ISO has left the door open: "Nader needs to address the same important questions facing working people today—from the war and occupation of Iraq to the continuing attacks on workers—and commit himself to presenting a left-wing alternative" (*Socialist Worker*, 9 April).

SAlt members have claimed that they lend Nader "critical support." This is a complete perversion of the Leninist tactic of critical support, which is support in an election to a *representative of the workers movement* who advances the political independence of the working class, even if crudely. In so doing, the workers candidate attracts the more class-conscious workers, but the program put forward offers no solution to the problems of the capitalist system. Revolutionary socialists seek such opportunities to exploit the contradictions of the reformists and raise the consciousness of the working class. For an example of the use of this tactic, see our article on critical support to SAlt's French affiliate, Gauche Révolutionnaire (GR—Revolutionary Left), a campaign which was possible because they "took a clear position against the racist headscarf campaign and drew a crude class line by running against the out-of-power popular front." The tactic provided a platform to polemicize against GR's reformist program ("French Elections: Trotskyists Give Critical Support to Gauche Révolutionnaire," *WV* No. 826, 14 May).

However, in addition to the fact that Nader is not a part of the workers movement but a representative of the ruling class, SAlt's campaign for Nader is far from "critical." In their article "Why You Should Support Nader in 2004" (*Justice*, March-April 2004), the only criticism to be found is that he has "mistakenly not highlighted his opposition to the occupation and is calling for the UN to take over Iraq." What SAlt alibis as a mistake is really a direct application of Nader's *program*—that U.S. imperialism can best pursue its interests under the fig leaf of the UN and by claiming to fight for "human rights." Nader isn't even for an immediate end to the U.S. occupation, just an "expeditious" one. He supports an occupation with more international troops, which would still be a colonial occupation! Let's not forget that the first Gulf war was fought with the blessing of the UN, and the subsequent sanctions—with a death toll of over 1.5 million—

continued on page 6

WV Photo

ISO at "Gore got more" rally in Chicago, November 2000. Reformist "movement" for Nader ended in support of Democrats.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 828 (GCU C-701) 11 June 2004

For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!

Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

U.S. Out Now!

In launching their one-sided slaughter in Iraq, the deranged neocons in the Bush White House promised that the U.S. occupiers would be greeted as liberators by the Iraqi peoples. According to this scenario, occupied Iraq would serve as a beachhead for establishing more pliant regimes in the region, particularly in Syria and Iran. Today these fantasies—as pollyannaish as they were arrogant—are going up in smoke.

The "weapons of mass destruction" that were the ostensible *casus belli* have failed to materialize for the simple reason that they don't exist. Bush is now busy trying to pass the buck. Some of the president's coterie are blaming Ahmad Chalahi for hoodwinking them. Convicted of embezzling funds in Jordan, Chalahi has been the recipient of millions from the Bush and Clinton administrations for services rendered as their Iraqi front man. On May 20, his mansion in Iraq was raided and trashed amidst accusations that he was an Iranian spy.

Six days later, the *New York Times* felt compelled to finally confess that its articles retailing stories of Hussein's supposed arsenal of weapons weren't as "rigorous as [they] should have been." The *Times* exonerates the Bush administration, blaming the false stories in its paper "at least in part on information from a circle of Iraqi informants, defectors and exiles bent on 'regime change' in Iraq" and lamenting that they, "along with the administration, were taken in." Now CIA chief George Tenet, assigned the role of a fall guy, has resigned in the midst of a barrage of criticism of manipulated "intelligence" and recriminations over the September 11 attacks.

On the ground in Iraq, the U.S. military has sparked widespread resistance to its savage occupation. Hoping to pacify largely Sunni Falluja, the U.S. brought out of mothballs a former general in Hussein's military and installed him as the commander of the puppet Iraqi forces in the area. More recently, the Americans have been scrambling to cut a deal with the Shi'ite forces in Najaf under cleric Moktada al-Sadr. Over 800 American soldiers have died in Iraq, the overwhelming majority since the U.S. government declared military victory. With its forces in Iraq stretched to the breaking point, the military announced that it would stop soldiers in units scheduled to go to Iraq or Afghanistan from leaving service even if their enlistments were up. This has added to the already rising disgruntlement of many soldiers and their families. Now, the government has announced that it will be moving 3,600 troops from South Korea to Iraq this summer.

Reuters

U.S. occupation forces patrol Sadr City, Baghdad, April 5.

Their demented visions of establishing a pliant, stable Iraq in shambles, even the central architects of the invasion are beginning to allow that maybe things aren't exactly going according to plan. As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was forced to admit: "If you had said to me a year ago, 'describe the situation you'll be in today one year later,' I don't know many people who would have described it—I would not have—described it in the way it happens to be today" (*Nation*, 17 May). Prominent neoconservative ideologue for the Bushites, William Kristol, now declares that Bush "did drive us into a ditch" (*Nation*, 7 June). This is a case of a rat deserting a sinking ship. After all, Kristol and his ilk gave Bush the road map into the ditch.

The horrors of the Abu Ghraib prison tortures have eroded support at home for the occupation. With polls showing mounting opposition among the American population and the presidential elections only months away, the Bush administration has been scrambling to demonstrate that it has some semblance of control in Iraq. This arrogant war-crazed administration has even dropped its xenophobic ravings against the French like yesterday's "freedom" fries, as Bush went hat-in-hand to "old" Europe looking for back-up to save face in Iraq. Specifically, the Bush administration wants their support for a United Nations resolution providing a "democratic" fig leaf for the continued neocolonial occupation of Iraq.

Much is being made by government pundits of the supposed hand over of "sovereignty" to an Iraqi interim government on June 30. Some "sovereignty"—the head of this government, Iyad Allawi, is a CIA asset! This puppet state will have "control" of everything except...the military and the economy! The 100,000-plus U.S. troops are slated to stay in the country for years. The U.S. has also imposed a law, unchangeable under the terms of the interim constitution, opening Iraq's economy to foreign ownership. Moreover, funds for "reconstructing" Iraq will be administered by the U.S. embassy headed by John Negroponte, who played a leading role in the funding and training of drug-running, sadistic torture gangs in Central America in the 1980s.

As we wrote in our article "Imperialists Carry Out Massacre in Falluja" (*WV* No. 824, 16 April):

> "The colonial carnage will not end as long as the U.S. imperialist forces, from the 'coalition' allies to the 15,000 mercenaries and CIA agents, are in Iraq. They must get out, *now!* But the imperialists will not give up their domination of the region until they are forced to by

continued on page 2

Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

See Page Four

Occupation of Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

> working-class struggle, both at home in the imperialist centers and in the Near East."

Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! U.S. get out! UN stay out!

Break With the Democratic Party of Racism and War!

The occupation of Iraq is giving the Bush administration serious trouble, potentially a boost for the electoral fortunes of the Democrats. This is certainly what the liberals are pushing for with their "anybody but Bush" campaign. However, the fact of the matter is that the Democratic Party has been the historic party of war in the U.S., from two world wars, Korea and Vietnam to military interventions in Haiti, Somalia and the Balkans under Clinton. Because of widespread illusions that the Democrats represent the interests of working people and the oppressed, they are better positioned than the Republicans to sell U.S. imperialism's military adventures to the American population.

The Iraq Liberation Act, which passed Congress almost unanimously in 1998 and laid the basis for a formal U.S. policy of seeking "regime change," was a product of the Clinton years as were the accusations that the Hussein regime was building up stockpiles of "weapons of mass destruction." Today, presumed Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry simply argues that the Democrats would carry out the occupation in a more "responsible" way, looking for more support from other imperialist powers as well as the UN and deploying greater numbers of troops to Iraq. This is hardly surprising; Kerry voted for the war as well as the major provisions of the "war on terror." Indeed, the Democrats are complaining that Bush is devoting insufficient resources to domestic "security," i.e., racist roundups, domestic spying and other repressive measures aimed particularly against labor, black people and immigrants.

The Kerry supporters at the *Nation* are fretting that antiwar sentiment will translate into a vote for minor capitalist politician Ralph Nader. This house journal of American liberalism complains that Nader has shot up in the polls by openly criticizing the occupation, while Kerry's numbers have remained steady. While striking a critical posture over the occupation, Nader simply argues that the U.S. should get out as soon as it is "expeditious," and wants the UN to take over the occupation. The UN has long provided "humanitarian" cover for the depredations of imperialism, particularly American, including during the first Gulf War and the more than decade-long imposition of sanctions that cost the lives of over 1.5 million people in Iraq. As he did in the 2000 elections, Nader is simply seeking to nudge the Democrats into providing a more liberal facade for U.S. capitalist rule at home and abroad.

As the U.S. imperialists launched their invasion of Iraq, we wrote in a March 19 statement of the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/U.S.: "It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe" (*WV* No. 800, 28 March 2003).

Today, we have a side against the U.S. occupiers, their allies and Iraqi lackeys. Every blow struck against the American occupation forces is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world. Those who take up arms against the occupation are waging a just and defensive struggle. At the same time, we do not lend any political support to the remnants of the former Ba'athist regime or the Islamic fundamentalists who appear to be leading much of the resistance. These forces are deadly enemies of the Iraqi working people. Communalist attacks against Shi'ites and Kurds (and others)—like the March 2 suicide bombings that killed 170 Shi'ite pilgrims in Karbala and Baghdad—are entirely criminal from the standpoint of the international working class.

Former allies of U.S. imperialism in the struggle against "godless Communism," the Islamic fundamentalist forces now express anger that the U.S. has taken all the spoils, depriving them of the opportunity to exploit, oppress, torture and plunder their "own" masses. If a resurgent Iraqi proletariat were to pursue a politically independent struggle against the occupation of Iraq, it would likely find itself facing a united front of American imperialism and Islamic fundamentalism—much like the alliance against the Soviet Red Army's intervention into Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Marxists seek to provide a proletarian axis of struggle against the imperialist occupation. But from the smashing of the Iraqi Communist Party by the Ba'athists in alliance with U.S. imperialism following the 1958 revolutionary situation to the UN-imposed sanctions, the workers movement in Iraq has been bled and is now decimated by the war and occupation. Unemployment in Iraq stands at around 70 percent.

This underlines the desperate necessity for international class-struggle actions against the occupation. Marxists seek to mobilize the oppressed masses behind the power of the proletariat in struggle, using workers mobilizations (strikes, hot-cargoing of military goods, etc.) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against both the imperialist occupying forces and their Iraqi lackeys. We are politically hostile to any other strategy as alien to our proletarian purpose.

It is in the direct interest of the U.S. proletariat to oppose U.S. imperialism—the same ruling class that occupies and rapes Iraq is also occupying the ghettos and barrios with their brutal cops, busting the unions, driving down wages, rounding up immigrants and eviscerating the democratic rights of everyone at home. American workers must understand that their interests and the interests of their rulers are completely counterposed.

But the trade-union bureaucracy obscures this understanding through its allegiance to the Democratic Party, which serves to shackle workers struggle and chain the working class to its class enemy. "Progressive" leaders of the ILWU longshore union, for example, are mobilizing double the number of union organizers to get out the vote for Kerry than they mobilized to galvanize labor support for the ILWU when it was locked out last year.

The working class needs a political party that fights for its class interests. It needs a party that will fight against the capitalist order that is the cause of oppression, exploitation and war today. The Spartacist League devotes all its efforts to educating the working class in the necessity of struggling to forge the revolutionary party capable of ending the rule of U.S. imperialism through victorious socialist revolution.■

The only thing worse than being an enemy of the U.S. is being a "friend": Donald Rumsfeld with Saddam Hussein in 1983 (left); with latest former ally, Ahmad Chalabi, in 2003.

Class Collaboration and the Spanish Revolution

TROTSKY

LENIN

As explained by Felix Morrow below, the revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants of Spain in the 1930s confirmed crucial lessons of the victorious 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the failed German Revolution of 1918-19. The entry of the anarchists and the ostensibly Marxist POUM into bourgeois popular-front governments, and their collaboration in the suppression of the insurgent workers, paved the way for the victory of Franco's reactionary forces. In the absence of a revolutionary party leading the working class in the fight for state power, capitalist rule was preserved through class collaboration.

Yet, the fact is, despite the rise of dual power, despite the scope of the power of the proletariat in the militias and their control of economic life, the workers' state remained embryonic, atomized, scattered in the various militias and factory committees and local anti-fascist defense committees jointly constituted by the various organizations. It never became centralized in nationwide Soldiers' and Workers' Councils, as it had been in Russia in 1917, in Germany in 1918-19. Only when dual power assumes such organizational proportions is there put on the order of the day the choice between the prevailing régime and a new revolutionary order of which the Councils become the state form. The Spanish revolution never rose to this point despite the fact that the real power of the proletariat was far greater than the power wielded by the workers in the Germany revolution or, indeed, than that wielded by the Russian workers before November. *Locally* and in each militia column, the workers ruled; but at the top there was only the government! This paradox has a simple explanation: there was no revolutionary party in Spain, ready to drive through the organization of soviets boldly and single-mindedly.

But isn't it a far cry from the failure to create the organs to overthrow the bourgeoisie, to the acceptance of the rôle of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie? Not at all. In a revolutionary period the alternatives are poised on a razor-edge: either one or the other. Every day is as a decade in peacetime. Today's "realism" becomes tomorrow's avenue to collaboration with the bourgeoisie....

Without developing soviets—workers' councils—it was inevitable that even the anarchists and the POUM would drift into governmental collaboration with the bourgeoisie. For what does it mean, in practice, to refuse to build soviets in the midst of civil war? It means to recognize the right of the liberal bourgeoisie to *govern* the struggle, i.e., to dictate its social and political limits.

Thus it was that all the workers' organizations, without exception, drifted closer and closer to the liberal bourgeoisie.

—Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* (1938)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Susan Fuller

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NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated July 9.

Protest Chicago Cop Killing of Activist May Molina!

Fight Back!

May Molina

We reprint below a leaflet issued by the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League on June 3.

They did it to May Molina, they'll do it to anyone—that's the chilling message the Chicago cops sent on May 24 when they dragged the 55-year-old grandmother and political activist from her wheelchair, threw her in jail on drug charges, and refused her life-sustaining medications, effectively condemning her to die in her cell. Molina, who suffered from diabetes, asthma, liver disease and a thyroid condition, was refused medical treatment despite pleas from her family and lawyer. By the early morning hours of May 26 she was dead. We in the Labor Black Struggle League (LBSL) condemn this sinister killing by the Chicago Police Department!

May Molina was an outspoken and courageous activist against police corruption and wrongful convictions here in Chicago. Co-founder of the groups "Families of the Wrongfully Convicted" and "Comite Exigimos Justicia" (We Demand Justice), Molina fought to free her imprisoned son, Salvador, and for dozens of victims of police brutality and frame-ups. For this she was in the cross hairs of the police. May Molina's killing is the domestic face of the government's bipartisan "war on terror." It's a war on blacks, immigrants, labor and all those who dare oppose this racist, capitalist state.

At bottom the capitalist state is an apparatus of repression consisting of the army, the courts, the prisons and the cops. Far from being neutral, it is a necessary tool with which the capitalists maintain control and carry out their class rule at home and abroad. The U.S. Army is in the midst of a bloody occupation in Iraq. Some of the sadistic guards at Abu Ghraib got their training here at home in prisons like SCI Greene where America's foremost political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, languishes on death row, framed up for killing a cop. The prisons are overflowing with black and Hispanic people targeted in the "war on drugs." And from coast to coast, the cops terrorize the ghettos and barrios. From Fred Hampton and Mark Clark to LaTanya Haggerty and Robert Russ to May Molina, we know too well what the Chicago cops do. None of these institutions can be reformed and made to work "for the people." Civilian review boards or the Chicago Police Review Board are offered up as a way to curb the rampant police brutality and corruption. In truth they serve as sounding boards to circumvent the genuine outrage generated by these atrocities and enforce the lie that the real problem is the result of a few bad apple cops and lack of oversight.

This was the message hundreds of protesters got at the May 27 protest and meeting at the Chicago Police Review Board. Grotesquely, Reverend Slim Coleman called for the need to restore the credibility of the cops! Aaron Patterson, who was himself framed up and spent 17 years on death row, called on U.S. top cops to carry out a Federal investigation. Demands for Federal investigations push the absurd illusion that the "Justice" Department of John Ashcroft will conduct a fair and impartial investigation.

WV Photo

Chicago Labor Black Struggle League at demonstration outside police headquarters protesting May Molina killing, May 27.

Andy Thayer (Chicago Anti-Bashing Network) told the audience to "come out in numbers" to make the cops and the city respond to demands and establish better procedures. Joan Parkin (International Socialist Organization supporter and coordinator of Enough is Enough) was full of moral outrage but offered no strategy beyond the usual pressure politics. Each of these strategies *politically disarms* protesters by pushing the dangerous illusion that the nature of the capitalist state can be changed by applying enough "mass pressure." There will be no end to police brutality short of the destruction of the system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression which the cops serve as armed guard dogs.

What is necessary is for Chicago's powerful, multiracial labor movement to mobilize and protest this atrocity, providing the crucial link between organized labor and the oppressed. Our signs at the May 27 protest called for mobilizing labor power to protest racist cop terror. A massive show of force by the unions would go a long way in staying the hand of racist cops and give organized expression to the justified outrage that seethes through black and Latino Chicago. In fact, that's exactly what happened in 1985 when Chicago Transit Authority bus driver David Johnson was framed up on bogus charges, including seven counts of reckless homicide, in a tragic accident while driving his bus. Hundreds of his Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) brothers and sisters marched on Police Headquarters, forcing Daley (then Cook County state's attorney) to drop all charges against Johnson. That mobilization worked because of the power that stood behind it. The working class uniquely has the power to bring production to a halt—to stop the buses, to shut the auto plants, to close the ports. *That's* "no business as usual!"

The primary obstacle to unleashing this power is the current misleadership of the unions which instead turns workers into voting cattle for the Democratic Party, the other party of war and racism. To win a battle you have to know who your friends are and who your enemies are. The Democrats may pretend to speak for working people and minorities or have more black and Hispanic officials but they, no less than the Republicans, are a party committed to the capitalist system. Just look at Chicago. For decades the Democratic Party has run "Segregation City" and it remains a racist hellhole with a legacy of police torture, killings and misery for the black and Hispanic population. Former police commander Jon Burge and his torture machine operated under Daley's watch. As bloodthirsty and dangerous as Bush is, electing a Democrat into the White House is no solution because the problem is the *capitalist system*, not the administration. Remember who bombed Iraq for eight years, who demolished welfare and who cranked up the death penalty—Democrat Clinton.

It's time to fight for what is necessary, not what others tell us is "possible!" It's going to take a workers revolution to establish an egalitarian society based on a socialist planned economy to truly address the horrors and wrongs of capitalist society. Working people need their own party, a multiracial revolutionary party, determined to fight for a workers government. To build that party requires a political fight against those who seek only to reform this rotting capitalist society. The Labor Black Struggle League, initiated by and fraternally allied with the Marxist Spartacist League, is part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

We will not forget May Molina! Drop the charges against Aaron Patterson and Robert Zajac, arrested at the May 26 Molina protest! For labor action to protest racist cop terror! Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party! Black liberation through socialist revolution! ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Letter

On Southern Race Relations and Marcus Dixon

30 May 2004
Chicago

Dear Comrades,

In the *Young Spartacus* article on the release of Marcus Dixon to a now uncertain future [*Workers Vanguard* No. 827, 28 May], I think we have an unfortunate formulation. In the fifth paragraph where we deal with the tinderbox of black male/white female relations we state: "Allegations of black men raping white women—overwhelmingly spurious—were a frequent pretext for lynchings." Why are those two words, "overwhelmingly spurious," even there? First off, the sentence would work just fine without them. Moreover, in the next part of the sentence we say that these allegations were used as a "pretext," i.e., it's garbage! "Rape" is beside the point because the racist terrorists don't need any actual crime to occur in order to murder black people. What some were "reacting" to mostly was just the thought of consensual interracial sex. In the main however the racist terror meted out had as its purpose the continued subjugation of the black race-color caste. It was and is purely a tool of terror.

Comradely,
Vance

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Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

The following is a slightly edited presentation by Spartacist speaker Adrian Ortega at a Spartacist League/ Spartacus Youth Club public educational in New York City on April 3.

Agustí Centelles, Barcelona

Women's militia unit departing Barcelona for Aragon front to fight reactionary Francoist forces.

PART ONE

Anarchism today has become fashionable among youth and left-liberal intellectual circles. Refracted in a myriad of ways, from "Green radicalism" to "Platformism," these youth seek to oppose a social reality dictated by an economic system based on the production of profits for the handful of capitalists. The emergence of anarchism as a prevalent ideology among radicalized youth today is a reflection of what we Marxists understand as a global retrogression in political consciousness following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 and the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe.

As the title of this forum indicates, this presentation will center on the counterposition between two political worldviews, Marxism and its contemporary continuation, Trotskyism, and anarchism, which played a decisive role in the events of the Spanish Civil War.

The Civil War (which lasted from approximately 1936 to 1939) represented the last opportunity for the proletariat to overthrow capitalism and open the road to socialism in Spain before the rise of the Francoist military dictatorship that would last more than 30 years and kill hundreds of thousands. In the key industrial center of Spain, Catalonia, armed workers organized militias and factory committees that shook the foundations of the capitalist order, private property and the state. But the most radical mass leaders of this movement (the anarchist FAI and the National Confederation of Labor [CNT] it controlled, and the centrist Workers Party of Marxist Unification [POUM]) along with the rest of the left (the Socialist Workers Party [PSOE] and the Stalinist Communist Party [PCE]) showed their political incapacity to lead the working class toward emancipation. It was only small groups (like the Friends of Durruti anarchists and the Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninists) who sought during the barricades fighting in May 1937 to bring revolutionary leadership to the proletariat. But these groups were not able to overcome their own limitations—centrally the Trotskyists' lack of authority among the proletariat and the Friends of Durruti's incapacity to break with an anarchist worldview—and lead the workers to power. Had there been a successful revolution in Spain, this would have drastically changed the shape of the world in which we live now.

This talk aims to explain why the strategic "mistakes" made by the anarchist leadership in the Spanish Civil War were not only "mistakes" but the logical conclusion of a program that inherently rests on class collaboration—i.e., a political alliance between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which constrains and subordinates the workers and their struggles to the framework of capitalism. I would like to give a few initial considerations regarding the political foundations of both currents.

Anarchists claim to fight for a classless society, and some of them understand the centrality of the proletariat in such a task, just as we Marxists do. However, they reject any form of "authority" and consequently oppose the existence of ***any state*** (meaning the use of organized violence to protect the interests of the class in power). They also renounce concepts like leadership and centralization and counterpose to them "autonomy" or "spontaneity." On the contrary, Marxists explain that "Authority and autonomy are relative things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society" (Friedrich Engels, "On Authority" [1872]). In other words, we don't blindly condemn authority as an abstract concept divorced from a certain social and economic reality. Most of the world today is based on the authority of a property-owning class, the bourgeoisie, exercised over the working masses through the instrumentality of a state, the capitalist state. We oppose and work to destroy that authority and the state that helps preserve it. But we welcome the authority of mass organizations of workers and other oppressed sectors in society, like workers councils (soviets), which would coordinate and centralize the proletariat's efforts to create a society based on workers democracy and prevent the destruction of the gains resulting from a social revolution—a workers state. Through eliminating the irrationality of capitalist production, economic planning under a workers state would allow the free development of productive forces and eliminate the material basis for social inequality. This would have to be a joint enterprise of the world proletariat and is the only way to eliminate the state and create a society based on "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

The anarchist ***abstract*** condemnation of "authority" has concrete ramifications on the organizational level. Anarchist organizations are decentralized entities that claim to exercise no authority over their members. This in itself is a complete fallacy, which the events in the Civil War completely prove. Marxists, on the contrary, explain the necessity of a centralized, democratic organization of the working class that groups together the proletariat's most conscious elements, works to raise the consciousness of the working class as a whole and exercises leadership, including leading the decisive struggles for workers power; a vanguard party that embraces the highest levels of democracy in its internal life and intervenes in struggle as a unified, conscious political force.

Hoover Institution

Leftist militia in Spanish Civil War. Stalinist-led Popular Front suppressed anarchist CNT militants and centrist POUM in the name of capitalist "democracy."

The Spanish Revolution

On 17 July 1936, General Francisco Franco assumed command of the Moors and Legionnaires of Morocco under the banner of the Spanish monarchy and the Catholic church. With the support of the most reactionary forces in Spain, Franco launched a military coup to overthrow the Republican government of president Manuel Azaña, which was a liberal bourgeois government, to replace it with a military dictatorship. This was to enforce through blood the interests of the propertied classes over the workers and peasants, and to put an end to decades of highly militant labor struggles in Spain. Azaña hid the advancement of Franco's army from the working class and made frantic and unsuccessful attempts to contact the military leaders and to come to an agreement with them. The Spanish proletariat, which had just gone through two years of harsh state repression under a right-wing government, distrusted the Azaña government and took matters into their own hands. They independently mobilized to gather weapons and build barricades to fight the bourgeois pro-monarchist reaction.

Some of the most epic battles between the Francoist forces and the armed proletariat started almost concurrently in major cities like Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona. I would like to read excerpts from Abel Paz's book, *Durruti: The People Armed* (1976), in his chapter "Barcelona in Flames":

> "On July 19, 1936, at 5 A.M. a new page in the revolution was beginning to the sound of gunfire, the crackling of machine guns which were mixed with the deafening sound of factory sirens, informing the people that the decisive hour had arrived. The seventh artillery regiment had left San Andres Park, divided, and was trying to reach the center of the capital by two different routes. But at the crossing of the 'Diagonal' the first detachment ran into a group of workers armed with grenades and pistols, which blocked its advance....
>
> "One part of the Montesa regiment followed by important military units of engineers, managed to slip into Marques del Duero Avenue (Paralelo) but was checked by a strong barricade put up by the workers of the Woodworkers' Union....
>
> "At the same time, near the Plaza de Palacio, the dockworkers of the Barceloneta district had routed the Montana artillery regiment....
>
> "Towards noon after four hours of fighting the uprising appeared to be defeated. One by one, all the areas of resistance fell into the hands of the people....
>
> "From then on the morale of the workers who were fighting, increased. In addition an important collection of weapons (guns and machine guns) fell into their hands. Barcelona began to have a new look."

This period is known as the "July events" in the Spanish Civil War. Heroic actions sprang from the workers' barricades to become class-struggle history. Within a few days, all Catalonia was in the hands of the proletariat. Madrid had seen the Francoist forces defeated by workers armed with scant stores of arms—with cobblestones and kitchen knives in Valencia—in the face of the embargo on arms by the government. Most of these workers were members of the CNT or the POUM.

Asturian miners outfitted a column of 5,000 dynamiters for a march on Madrid, which arrived one day later to guard the streets. Armed workers committees displaced the customs officers at the borders, and a joint committee of the General Workers Union (UGT—affiliated to the PSOE) and the CNT took charge of all transportation in Spain. A union book or

membership card from a leftist party was the only requirement to enter the country. The police, the Civil and Assault Guards, which had sided against the workers in the battles, had been replaced by workers militias that patrolled the cities. But how did workers get to this point? Let me back up a few years and make some clarifications.

Anarchism was the predominant ideology among the Spanish proletariat in the 20th century, in great part thanks to the country's slow economic development during the previous three centuries. In the northern and eastern regions of Spain, like Catalonia and Aragon, the principal anarchist trade-union federation, the CNT, organized the most politically advanced workers in those provinces. The leaders of the CNT represented a trend inside anarchism called syndicalism. The syndicalists correctly recognized the industrial proletariat as the central agency for overthrowing capitalism. They believed, though, that trade unions would be the only instrument necessary to bring about a socialist revolution, and opposed, as all anarchists do, the idea of a vanguard party of the working class.

Given their relationship with the working class, anarcho-syndicalists sometimes had very good political impulses. During the First World War, when Spain's neutrality meant that its production increased, a staunch opposition to the war within the Spanish left was found among the anarcho-syndicalists of the CNT, who, in some cases, according to Gerald H. Meaker in his book *The Revolutionary Left in Spain, 1914-1923*, "went beyond mere pacifism and instinctively favored ending the war by a popular revolution." The revolutionary Marxist V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party in Russia had forthrightly opposed the war from the first day and fought for the defeat of their own bourgeoisie through the seizure of power by the working class.

With the support of important sectors of the Russian proletariat and the oppressed, Lenin had called for a workers revolution in Russia to end the war, collectivize industry, nationalize the land and expropriate the bourgeoisie and the banks. In October 1917 (under the old Russian calendar), the Bolsheviks leading the soviets, organs of proletarian power, led a proletarian insurrection that established the first workers state in history. Workers democracy found its concrete expression in congresses of soviets and councils of workers, peasants and soldiers, which had begun to run the economy of the biggest country in the world.

I.P. Goldenberg, a member of the Mensheviks (a reformist party in Russia) had denounced Lenin as "a candidate for one European throne that has been vacant for thirty years—the throne of Bakunin!" for fighting for workers revolution. However, the truth is that anarcho-syndicalists in Russia and elsewhere, including Spain, like Joaquin Maurín and Andrés Nin (future leaders of the POUM), realized from the experience of the Russian workers the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Gerald Meaker speaks of one anarchist militant who wrote in the anarchist paper *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Freedom):

> "The Russian revolution, according to this militant, was not yet an Anarchist society, but it offered the 'direct means' by which to achieve one. All the Anarchists of the world would have to do as the Russian 'maximalists' had done: they would have to '***destroy authoritatively***... the present edifice based upon privilege and injustice in order to begin constructing the great city of happiness. Anarchy'." [emphasis added]

The best of this generation of anarchists and syndicalists—like Victor Serge, the Marxist historian and Trotsky biographer; Alfred Rosmer, a leading anarcho-syndicalist in France who later became Trotsky's close collaborator; and James P. Cannon, an anarcho-syndicalist in the American Industrial Workers of the World who became the founder of Trotskyism in the U.S.—were won to revolutionary Marxism by the living example of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Revolution. Anarchism can't lead to a successful socialist revolution, as the events in Spain show.

Sergi i Octavi Centelles

Interlink Books

Bus with CNT sign marking collectivization of Barcelona transport system (left); peasants with rifles work on collectivized land.

Historia 16

During the Civil War, anarchist leaders Juan García Oliver (far left) and Federica Montseny joined as ministers in Popular Front government.

The Betrayal of the Popular Front

The 1933 Nazi victory in Germany propelled mass unrest throughout Spain, including a general strike led by the CNT and UGT in October 1934. That same month, miners and other sectors of the proletariat in the northern region of Asturias rose up in arms against the recently formed government of Alejandro Lerroux. The anarchists abstained in the elections won by Lerroux; but not on the basis of any principles (as we will see later). Their main reason was their "apoliticism," an absurd rejection of participation in elections or parliament. But if you are serious about fighting for socialist revolution, would you waste any opportunity to let significant numbers of people know what you stand for? Imagine the effect that a speech in Congress by a Trotskyist denouncing the colonial occupation in Iraq would have on both the American working class and the soldiers in Iraq. To Marxists, the question of whether or not to participate in elections is a tactical question based on concrete circumstances. At the same time, Marxists renounce in principle the taking of any executive ministerial post in any capitalist government because it could not mean anything other than the direct administration of the capitalist state.

Lerroux governed in coalition with the CEDA (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rightists) of José Maria Gil Robles, and, given the victory of Hitlerite fascism in Germany, Lerroux's regime was feared as representing the rise of reactionary, right-wing forces in Spain. The bloody defeat of the Asturian uprising at the hands of Franco-led forces (5,000 people killed and 30,000 arrested) paved the way for two years of increased repression against the labor movement.

In January 1936 (six months before Franco's attempted coup) the popular-front coalition led by the Republican Left, the party of the liberal bourgeoisie, had come up with a program for the February elections which basically allowed a nominal restoration of regional autonomy for the Catalan region and offered to free political prisoners imprisoned during the prior two years. The program called also to guarantee respect for private property rights in the countryside and the cities, rejected any nationalization of the land and called to maintain capitalist control over industry and the banks.

The Republicans led an electoral bloc with Manuel Azaña at its head. The coalition included the UGT, the PSOE, the PCE and the POUM. And it was supported by the anarchists. This was a popular-front coalition, where the interests of the proletariat were subordinated to those of the capitalist class.

What was the POUM? The POUM was what we call a centrist party, i.e., a party that is revolutionary in words but reformist in deeds. It had emerged from the fusion between the Trotskyist Spanish Communist Left of Andrés Nin, and the BOC (Workers and Peasants Bloc) of Joaquin Maurin, which was a more right-wing centrist party that adapted to Catalan nationalism. Trotsky strenuously denounced the signing of the electoral pact by the POUM as a "*betrayal of the proletariat for the sake of an alliance with the bourgeoisie*" and broke political relations with them.

Azaña took office as president in May 1936 in the midst of a great wave of strikes. From June 10 to the first days of July, the number of workers striking against the deepening economic crisis had grown from half a million to over a million. Bourgeois democracy was starting to crumble.

Around the same time as Franco's attempted coup and the workers uprising during the "July events" in 1936, big chunks of the bourgeoisie in Catalonia (the region that comprised 70 percent of the industry in Spain) had fled the country, leaving their factories, lands and properties behind. Once the reaction had been defeated, CNT workers began to seize the abandoned factories and create workers committees that organized production on a local level. A similar phenomenon occurred in the countryside. These workers committees, and the workers militias formed to fight against Franco's army, became the basis for what we call a *dual power* situation, i.e., a temporary state of affairs in which both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie directly contest for power. It is necessary to study these workers cooperatives and militias, since they represent the *embodiment* of the anarchist economic and military program.

On July 20, with workers celebrating the defeat of Franco, Luis Companys, who was the president of the bourgeois Generalitat government in Catalonia, met with the leadership of the CNT-FAI—with García Oliver as the main anarchist spokesman. Companys was an astute bourgeois politician who had been at some point a lawyer for the CNT. Here is what he proposed to Garcia Oliver and the rest of those in attendance:

> "You have won and the power is in your hands. If you don't need me and if you don't want me as President of Catalonia, tell me now and I will be only one more soldier in the struggle against fascism. But if on the contrary you believe that in this job, where I would have been killed if there had been a fascist victory, I and my men, my name and my prestige can be useful in the struggle which has ended in Barcelona today, but whose outcome is still unknown in the rest of Spain, you can count on me. You can count on my loyalty as a man and a party leader who believes that a shameful past came to an end today, and I sincerely hope that Catalonia will be in the vanguard of the countries who are the most progressive in social matters."
>
> — quoted in Abel Paz, *Durruti: The People Armed*

And the anarchists went for it. García Oliver reports the results of the discussions in the CNT and the FAI as follows: "On July 21, 1936, a Regional Plenum of the Local Federations...took place in Barcelona. The situation was analyzed and it was decided not to speak about Libertarian Communism as long as part of Spain was in the hands of the fascists. ***The Plenum decided for collaboration*** opposed by only one delegation from 'Bajo Llobregat'.... Any extreme position inspired by adventurism or inflexibility could have been a disaster because the revolution would have been exhausted..." [emphasis added]. With this, the anarchist workers were subordinated through their leadership to the will of the Generalitat government. Nine months later, Companys was on the phone calling for an air

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LA VOZ LENINISTA

Organo de la Sección Bolchevique-leninista de España

(por la IV Internacional)

El camino de la victoria empieza en el Frente Revolucionario del Proletariado

Sobre la Conferencia Internacional de Barcelona

La Voz Leninista **(Leninist Voice), newspaper of Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain. American Trotskyist Felix Morrow documented betrayal of Spanish Revolution by Stalinists, anarchists and POUM leaders.**

Ukraine Con Game: Opportunism, Crime and Punishment

IG's Potemkin Village Idiocy *Ad Absurdum*

"In order to impress Tsarina Catherine with his self-promoting efforts at developing the barren Russian steppes in the 18th century, Prince Potemkin supposedly constructed elaborate facades of artificial villages for her to see when her carriage passed through the region. A 'Potemkin village' is what came to mind when we saw the first issue of the *Internationalist* (January-February 1997), a 64-page, two-color journal recently published by a handful of defectors from our organization who call themselves the 'Internationalist Group' (IG)."

—"Potemkin Village Idiocy," *WV* No. 663, 7 March 1997

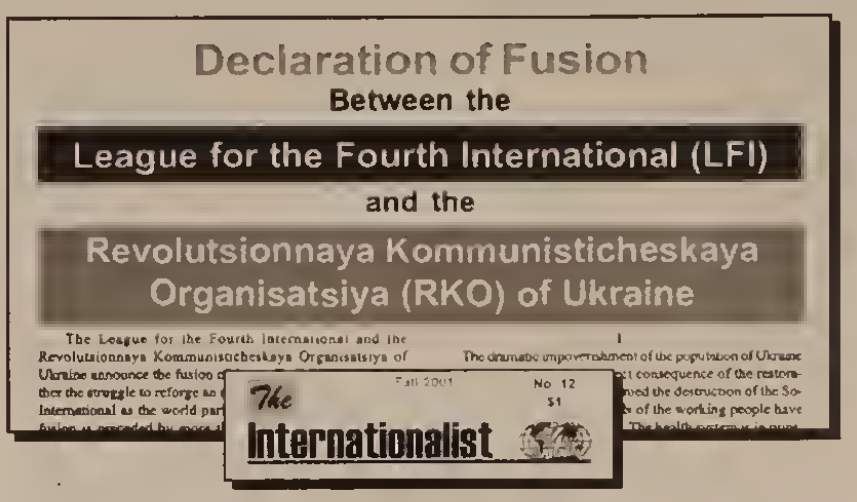
That's what we wrote nearly seven years ago. In that time the little Potemkins of the IG have been busy constructing the facade that is their internatinnal. In cyherspace they present long, turgid articles in multiple languages intended to give the grand impression that they swim deep in the "boiling water" of the worldwide class struggle. On the ground, the reality is quite different.

A case in point: the "Revolutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organisatsiya" (RKO—Revolutionary Communist Organization) of Ukraine. In July 2001, with much fanfare, the IG published a "Declaration of Fusion" between their "League for the Fourth International" (LFI) and the RKO. They solemnly vowed to "uphold Bolshevik-Leninism" and to "further the struggle to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution." Fine words, but there was one problem: the RKO never existed.

Last summer, after a two-year marriage, the IG declared annulment when it was revealed that (surprise!) their mail-order Ukrainian bride of a "section" was a bunch of con artists scamming Western leftists for money. The hustlers, who had long been the Ukrainian section of Peter Taaffe's "Committee for a Workers' International" (CWI), were able to sell themselves off as the "sections" of as many as ten different self-professed revolutionary organizations, including the grotesquely misnamed International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) and the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP).

As we explained in *Workers Vanguard* when the scandal broke (see "Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev," *WV* No. 808, 29 August 2003):

> "We are not privy to the sleazy details, and we have no confidence in anybody's account of what happened. But by their own words these so-called 'victims' stand condemned as utter frauds and co-conspirators with their Kiev con men! Now they scream, 'We wuz robbed!' But they were more than happy to perpetrate their con on the left public by trumpeting their fraudulent Ukrainian sections."


Declaration of Fusion
Between the
League for the Fourth International (LFI)
and the
Revolutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organisatsiya (RKO) of Ukraine
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Fall 2001 No. 12 $1
The Internationalist

IG declaration of fusion in Ukraine boasted that it was "preceded by more than a year of discussions and joint work on key questions." Now IG cries, "We wuz robbed!"

That the IG ended up in the embrace of a gang of brazen con artists should not come as a surprise to those who have followed its politieal trajectory. From its inception the IG has accommodated itself promiscuously to alien forces, seeking "regroupments" with politically distant elements as a substitute for the necessary struggle to forge a programmatically cohesive, Leninist international organization. In 1995-96, while still a member of onr organization, Jan Norden (now the IG's supremo) sought a phony regroupment with elements of the Communist Platform of the German Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), claiming that the PDS maintained "attachments" to what was by then the long-since defunct East German deformed workers state. Indeed, the Communist Platform/PDS had been junior partners with Gorbachev in the *sellout* of East Germany to the West German imperialists. Upon their defection from the ICL, Norden et al. linked up with the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista (LQB) in Brazil, an organization with which we had just broken fraternal relations when it became clear that they were simply trade-union opportunists. Subsequently the LQB went on to cross the class line repeatedly by suing a trade union in the bourgeois courts.

We recognize that revolutionary regroupment—principled splits and fusions with other tendencies in the workers movement—is an important tactic for constructing a Leninist vanguard, including on international terrain. The Spartacist League/U.S. emerged out of the Revolutionary Tendency, an opposition in the American Socialist Workers Party. Over the course of years we recruited from groupings that originated in ostensibly Trotskyist, Maoist, New Leftist, feminist and other tendencies. The essential basis for such regroupments has been a *common programmatic framework*—tested in practice through exemplary actions and involvement in social struggle; vigorous internal debate and rigorous cadre education.

But the purpose of Norden's LFI is not this but to impress the unwary with cyberspace boasting of "international connections." Lofty statements are written for public consumption and to create an umbrella of "orthodoxy" to shield the very alien practices carried out on the ground. To believe the IG, Norden himself had little clue what his "Ukrainian section" had been doing for two years! The BT now claims to have recruited the IG's Dutch affiliate—which by the BT's account consisted of one individual (*1917* No. 26, 2004)!

Mutual Amnesty

At the time of our previous article on what happened in Kiev, the IG had yet to comment on the con game. A response appeared in the October-November 2003 *Internationalist*. Notwithstanding the differences the IG claims with the state-capitalist LRP or the dubious Stalinophobic BT headed by the sociopath Bill Logan, Norden's response was virtually identical. They all attempted to salve their wounded egos, pontificating that, after all, the Bolsheviks were infiltrated by Roman Malinovsky, a secret agent for the tsar, and the Trotskyist Left Opposition by Mark Zborowski (Étienne), a Stalinist agent. There is no relationship in these comparisons to what actually happened in Ukraine. Far from being a deep dark secret of the invisible espionage netherworld, the real nature of the Kiev scam artists was known to the Ukrainian left, and the IG were among the laughing stocks:

> "Kiev left-radical circles ever since the mid-90s have been following with interest the seams of a group led by the well-known ede, V... Since all of these political sects wanted a Ukrainian section for prestige, this group set up ties and easily passed itself off as co-thinkers.... 'Oh, it's so easy to fool me. I myself wanted to be deceived' [Pushkin]... This looks a little like provocation, but in Kiev no one would fall for it—it was all too obvious."
>
> —Indymedia.ru, Article #5744, "Anarchist from Kiev," 5 September 2003 (translated from Russian)

Wouldn't any politically observant person have noticed that in the space of a few months, several political tendencies were acquiring Ukrainian "sections" in Kiev, including quirky groups like the De Leonists in the American Socialist Labor Party? The IG and others didn't ask questions because they didn't want to know the answer. Like Pushkin's love-struck fool, they refused to see what was there because they did not *want* to see.

When the Kiev hoax was exposed, the IG acted like pious politicians, who, when caught with their pants down in a den of iniquity, claim they were carrying out "their own independent probe." They have the nerve to cite Victor Serge's excellent 1921 handbook, *What Every Revolutionary Should Know About State Repression*:

> "In his conclusions, Serge wrote: 'Provocation is much more dangerous in terms of the distrust it sows among revolutionaries. As soon as a few traitors are unmasked, trust disappears from within the organizations. It is a terrible thing, because confidence in the party is the cement of all revolutionary forces'."
>
> —"A Band of Political Impostors and Swindlers in Ukraine," 27 August 2003

In a revolutionary organization "trust" is based on ***verification in common political work***. Bolshevism was born of a split over Lenin's insistence in 1903 that no one be extended the trust and responsibility of party membership without direct systematic work in a party committee. By being compelled to carry out systematic revolutionary work under the eye of the party, Serge wrote, "The agent provocateur is a policeman who serves the revolution in spite of himself. Because he must always *appear* to be serving it. But in this question there are no appearances.... There is no way you can be a member halfway or superficially." For the Kiev con artists, their only "obligation" as members was to cash the checks as they came in.

Along with Zborowski, Malinovsky and other provocateurs, in its article on Ukraine the IG mentions the name of Raymond Molinier, a member of the French Trotskyists in the 1930s. The IG says that

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AP

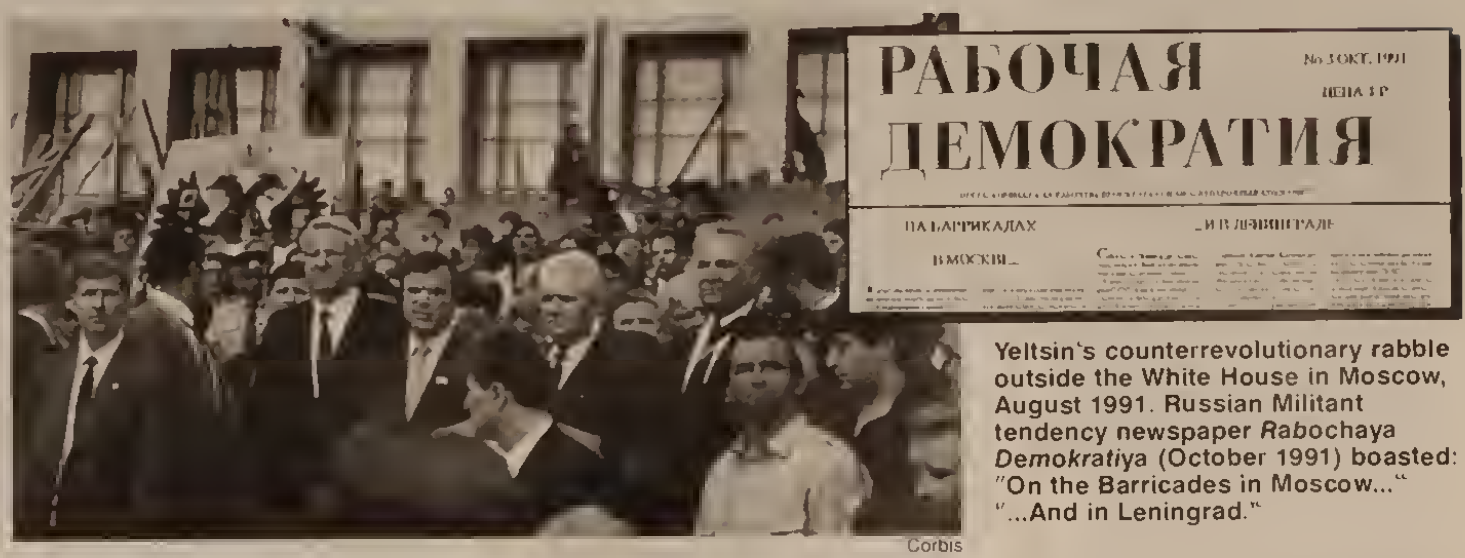
February 2000: Chechen capital Grozny ravaged by Russian army. IG's Ukraine fusion statement said nothing in defense of Chechens against Russia's genocidal onslaught.

Taaffeite CWI: From Yeltsin's Barricades to the Augean Stables

As many as ten self-styled revolutionary organizations around the world have boasted for several years about their supposed Ukrainian "sections." Last July, the Ukrainian affiliates of these fraudulent Internationals went up in smoke. It turned out that the Ukrainian section of Peter Taaffe's London-based Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), led by one Oleg Vernik, had organized a cynical scam to defraud these groups for money by simultaneously pretending to be the Ukrainian "section" of all of them (see "Con Artists Get Conned—Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev," *WV* No. 808, 29 August 2003, and article on page 6 of this issue). The CWI leadership protests that it had no responsibility for the swindle. But this operation, given its far-flung scope and glaring visibility before the Ukrainian and Russian left, would have been *impossible* unless the London offices of Peter Taaffe looked the other way.

Now the CWI leadership is engaged in damage control, admitting what it feels obliged to—and not a whit more. A "Statement from the International Secretariat of the CWI on the Ukraine Organisation," dated 29 August 2003, informed the conned groups that six of the Kiev con artists had been expelled from the CWI. As for the others, the statement declared that "within the ranks of the Ukrainian organisation are some very good comrades, some of whom acquiesced to the dishonest methods"! Oleg Vernik himself was merely suspended, and his expulsion was referred to the next meeting of the CWI's International Executive Committee (IEC). To our knowledge, no further information has been released by the CWI on their current relationship with Vernik.

The CWI clearly hoped to keep their Russian organization out of the spotlight and even mandated it to join in the cleanup of its Kiev mess. But a leader of the Moscow CWI, Ilya Budraitskis, was cited by three groups—the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) and, reportedly, the Internationalist Group (IG)—as one of the con artists. The BT then posted a statement voted by the CWI's IEC at a 19-24 November 2003 meeting, admitting that Budraitskis had, indeed, presented himself to the LRP, the BT and Workers Power's League for the Fifth International as a member of their putative Kiev group. Assuring the world that Budraitskis "was not motivated by any desire to gain money" and that he is committed "to building the CWI on a principled basis," they announced that he had been removed from leading bodies of the Russian CWI for at least six months.



Corbis

Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary rabble outside the White House in Moscow, August 1991. Russian Militant tendency newspaper *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (October 1991) boasted: "On the Barricades in Moscow..." "...And in Leningrad."

The Russian Taaffeites' real attitude—utter cynicism—is reflected on their Web site where they have carried on a dialogue with critics of their handling of the scandal. To one critic who protested, "You are wrong to think that people will soon forget," the site administrator responded, "We don't give a damn who, what or where is forgotten or remembered." He continued: "No one but losers is interested in the fate of the 'socialist activists of the BT' and their ilk. After all, they regarded themselves as the most intelligent and advanced—so, they got what their intelligence and level of development were worth." When the critic insisted to "know your position on the Ukrainian CWI," the site administrator replied: "On what basis do you demand a reckoning from us? This is an internal CWI matter."

The CWI on Yeltsin's Barricades

The corruption of the Ukrainian and Russian CWI sections flourished in the particularly reactionary setting of the post-counterrevolution ex-USSR. We in the International Communist League fought to the end against the capitalist counterrevolutions of 1989-92 in the former Soviet bloc on the basis of Trotsky's program (see "Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union," *WV* Nos. 809 and 810, 12 and 26 September 2003). A crucial part of our fight in the USSR was a ruthless exposure of the CWI's prostitution of Trotskyism to counterrevolution.

These days Peter Taaffe claims the Militant tendency opposed Russian president Boris Yeltsin's pro-imperialist countercoup in August 1991 that ushered in the period of open counterrevolution, culminating in the creation of a bourgeois state and the restoration of capitalist rule. In a 2002 online publication, *Militant's Real History*, Taaffe wrote: "We publicly distanced ourselves from the pro-capitalist Yeltsinites, some of whom flooded towards the defence of their hero at the White House in Moscow." This is a *lie*. They were on Yeltsin's White House barricades. The front-page headlines of their newspaper, *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (October 1991), trumpeted: "Where We Were," "On the Barricades in Moscow..." "...And in Leningrad." They wrote:

> "I am a participant in the struggle for democracy. I would like to tell about how this all happened, what I saw with my own eyes.
>
> "On the 19th, Monday...
>
> "I went to the White House and helped build barricades around the monument to the martyrs of the 1905 Revolution.
>
> "It was symbolic that the barricades of the 1905 Revolution stood on the same place where the barricades of the revolution of 1991 arose! Only then, the revolution ended in defeat, whereas, now, in Victory!"

The International Communist League fought for unconditional military defense of the Soviet workers state and its collectivized property forms. In our August 1991 statement, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!", tens of thousands of copies of which were distributed throughout the Soviet Union, we wrote that workers mobilizations should have cleaned out the counterrevolutionary rabble on Yeltsin's barricades, thus opening the road to proletarian political revolution to sweep the traitors away.

The adherents to Taaffe's Militant tendency did not just climb on Yeltsin's barricades—where they were, in any case, not needed. They went to the factories, where these social-democratic traitors tried to *head off* workers mobilizations against Yeltsin and Bush's "democrats":

> "From the declarations of the [putschist State Emergency Committee] it followed that they were acting against the so-called 'democrats,' and that posed the danger of support to the putschists by workers organizations that did not share the principles of the 'democrats'—the rule of private property and capitalist power. And that is exactly what happened. Some of the workers organizations were getting ready to send greetings of welcome, and at several factories the workers even tried to organize defense detachments in support of the putschists.
>
> "From the morning on, all of our members explained to workers at their workplaces that the position of the Emergency Committee did not coincide with their interests. In addition to this, they connected up with worker activists of other organizations, in order to prevent hasty actions."
>
> —"Where We Were"

The impulse of these workers was far better than that of the Militant tendency, whose support to Yeltsin put it in the same camp as every imperialist power on the face of the globe. Unfortunately, the stodgy bureaucrats of the putschist "Emergency Committee" sought to prevent the workers from mobilizing against Yeltsin because they too were committed to a program of capitalist restoration and didn't want in any way to antagonize the imperialist powers. As our August 1991 statement noted, class-conscious Soviet workers who saw the urgent need to halt the capitalist-restorationist forces would have been against Yeltsin but also would have had no illusions in the anti-Yeltsin coup. Pointing to a call by a workers conference that had been initiated the previous month by delegates from 400 major Moscow-area plants to form workers militias for the preservation of socialized property in solidarity with the "Emergency Committee," we wrote: "A call for workers militias to smash the counterrevolutionary Yeltsinite demonstrations was certainly in order. But if the Emergency Committee had consolidated power, it would have attempted to disband any such workers militias, which would otherwise have inevitably and rapidly escaped its political control. The last thing these degenerate Stalinists wanted to see was the independent mobilization of the working class."

We fought to oust the Stalinist traitors through a proletarian political revolution based on the defense of the gains of the great 1917 Russian Revolution that remained embodied in the Soviet Union despite its degeneration. The Militant's opposition to the Stalinist coup-makers flowed directly from their line that anything, including capitalist restoration, was preferable to "Stalinist totalitarianism."

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Spartacist

Taaffeites welcomed fascists of National Bolshevik Party to their 1998 May Day Moscow forum (right). Above: National Bolshevik Party depiction of "ideal" member, modeled after Hitler's stormtroopers.

IG...

(continued from page 6)

Molinier "came up with one opportunist gimmick after another, and made his living through bill collecting," and then mentions that he was expelled from the Fourth International. But contrary to the impression left by the IG, that was not the reason for Molinier's expulsion. No charges were ever presented against him on these grounds. Perhaps the reason Norden does not give the straight story on Molinier is because he bears some political resemblance to the latter. Molinier was a political adventurer who was all too willing to cut corners programmatically for short-term organizational advantage. Despairing of the hard political struggle which had to be waged against popular-frontism in France, he set up his own newspaper in 1935 and was expelled for this by the Trotskyists. When the Molinier group launched its fake "mass paper" which promised to "speak the language of the factories and the fields," to "tell of the misery which reigns there," to "express its passions and rouse to revolt," Trotsky had the following scathing comment:

> "This is a very laudable intention, although the masses know perfectly well their own misery and their feelings of revolt (stifled by the patriotic apparatuses with the aid of the [centrist] Pivertists). What the masses can demand of a newspaper is *a clear program and a correct orientation*."
>
> —Leon Trotsky, "What Is a 'Mass Paper'?" (1935)

IG Spits on Revolutionary Continuity of ICL

Stalin noted that paper would take anything printed on it, but the IG was so anxious to rush through a fusion that they didn't even bother to check their putative marriage partner's paper positions. The Fall 2001 *Internationalist* ran a graphic captioned, "RKO posters raised LFI's call for Arab/Hebrew workers revolution." The accompanying fusion declaration boasted: "Late last year, as courageous Arab youth armed with nothing but stones were being slaughtered in the West Bank and Gaza, the LFI and RKO coordinated our participation in protest actions denouncing the Zionist murderers, including putting out posters calling to 'Defend the Palestinian People' and 'For Arab-Hebrew Workers Revolution! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!'" But the placards appearing in the graphic contain neither the slogan "For Arab-Hebrew Workers Revolution!" nor "For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!" Now, *after* the scandal has been publicized, Norden acknowledges that his bloc partners "did send us leaflets they claimed to have issued in antiwar protests, but they did not have the position of the LFI on Israel-Palestine, which had been a subject of considerable discussion." A little late!

But at least they had a formally correct line on Chechnya, right? After all, military defense of Chechnya against the Russian-led bloody colonial war is the cutting edge issue for Marxists in the region. Russia's war against the largely Islamic population in Chechnya has been central to ideologically reinforcing Great Russian chauvinism, which is a key prop for the new capitalist regime. This ideology asserts itself as well in much of eastern Ukraine, where centuries of tsarist Russian domination had far deeper roots than in western Ukraine, and where today a substantial Russian population resides. But the IG's fusion statement not only failed to take a stand on the side of the Chechens' just war against Putin's genocidal onslaught, it said *not one word* on the war at all!

At the time of their Ukrainian fusion, the IG boasted that it was the "first realization" of their perspective of international revolutionary regroupment. Indeed! While the IG occasionally likes to claim that it stands on the work of the ICL when their leaders were members, their fusion statement with the RKO was premised on the rejection and disappearance of the ICL's proud history in the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine. The fusion statement proclaimed that the RKO was composed of people who "publicly announced their intention to establish the Fourth International section" in 1989. But the IG could not, and did not, say what the members of the "RKO" were doing at this time, a period in which the ICL was actively fighting against counterrevolution and for the program of revolutionary Trotskyism. In the summer of 1989, spontaneous strikes which erupted in the Soviet coal fields against the ravages of Gorbachev's "market socialism" dramatically demonstrated the potential for militant working-class struggle. A year later, two comrades of the ICL intervened at a conference of Soviet miners held in

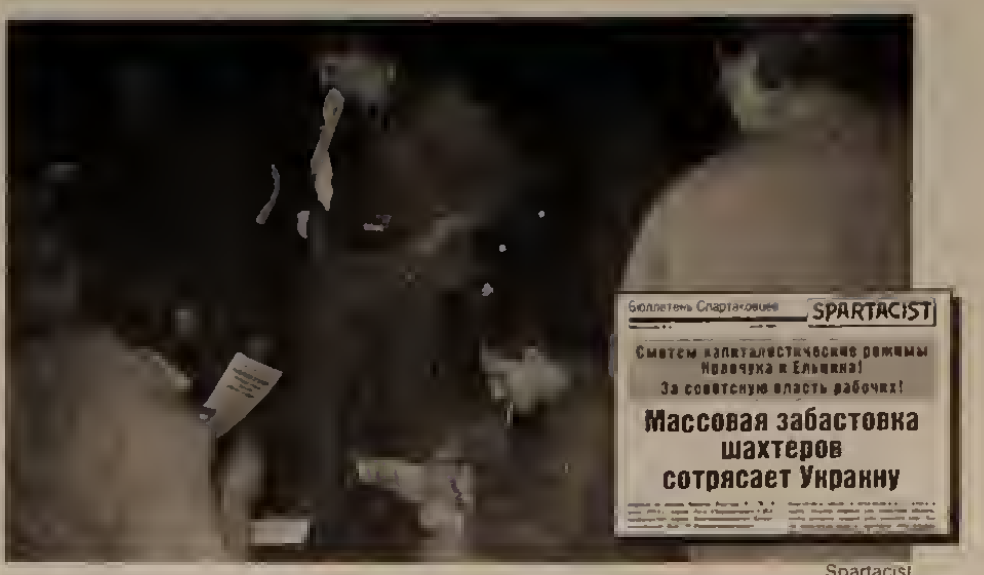
WV Photo

Martha Phillips
1948-1992

Donetsk, Ukraine. Politically it was the ICL on the one side and, on the other, British embassy representatives, the AFL-CIO's Freedom House, the Russian fascist NTS and the scab British "Union of Democratic Miners" (UDM), an anti-Communist outfit formed and financed in an attempt to break the British coal strike of 1984-85 led by Arthur Scargill's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The ICL spiked an attempt by the UDM and their imperialist advisers to get the Soviet miners to denounce Scargill.

When the hour of mortal danger to the USSR arrived in August 1991, the ICL was unique on the left in seeking to mobilize the Soviet workers against the counterrevolutionary coup of Yeltsin and George Bush Sr. As capitalism consolidated itself, we sought to drive home to the working people of the ex-USSR the lessons of this catastrophe. In June 1993 the ICL intervened in a massive strike of coal miners and other workers in Ukraine, selling over 2,400 pieces of Spartacist literature at one rally alone at the peak of a strike that represented the first proletarian challenge to the capitalist states erected in the wake of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR.

The IG concluded its fusion statement with the empty boast that in Ukraine it would "continue the work of the tens of thousands of Bolshevik-Leninists who fell under Stalinist, fascist and bourgeois-'democratic' repression." Shamefully, the statement made no mention of the murder in February 1992 of Martha Phillips, the ICL's leading spokesman in Moscow. The authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed our comrade. Nor does the IG say anything about the ICL's expulsion from Ukraine in 1995. The ICL was lyingly accused by the Ukrainian government of seeking "the overthrow of the government" and our members were banned from the country. The banning of the ICL was splashed across television screens and the press throughout Ukraine and Russia. This was done not only to muzzle us but to further intimidate the left and workers movement. We organized international protests, urging leftists and workers organizations to take a stand in defense of our rights and theirs.



Spartacist

ICL Moscow Station distributed Russian-language supplement titled "How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled" at June 1993 Ukraine miners strike. *Spartacist* supplement on miners strike (inset).

Presumably the leaders of the IG, who were members of our organization throughout this period, ought to have at least been interested in what their bloc partners had done in response to this state repression of the ICL, and in fact this would be one way of testing the authenticity of any group that claimed to have been Trotskyist since 1989. But the IG fusion statement was smugly silent on this, as it was on the other work of the ICL in Ukraine. As irony would have it, the Ukraine hustlers of today were then, as the Ukrainian section of the CWI, the ICL's main leftist opponent in Kiev, where we were engaged in regular political debate at Kiev University. They not only did not protest our expulsion, but they were somehow able to continue their operation at Kiev University, where longtime CWI honcho Oleg Vernik is evidently now an assistant lecturer, without a hitch for almost another decade!

In the fusion statement the only comment made by the "RKO comrades" about the ICL and its work is that we allegedly refused "to debate programmatic questions." No one who has ever met with a member of the ICL would believe this statement! What this really shows is that the IG blindly embraced these dubious elements precisely because they *denounced* the ICL!

"League for a Fraudulent International"

The IG's methods are hardly new, as attested by their very origins in breaking from the ICL. A case in point was their embrace of Luta Metalúrgica (LM), now the LQB, as they were departing the ICL. LM had originated as a proletarian formation with a militant history in the steel industry center of Volta Redonda (near Rio de Janeiro). But future IG leader Norden and his sidekick Negrete sought to undermine our struggle with LM for programmatic clarity from start to finish, from the September 1994 Declaration of Fraternal Relations to their constant attempts to obstruct political fights, to their ultimate bloc with LM's amorphous centrism against the ICL.

The 1994 declaration—wholly drafted by Norden and Negrete, who went on to become *líder mínimo* of the IG—was deliberately cast to portray a broad, deep and synthetic programmatic agreement that simply did not exist. At the same time it virtually ignored issues such as permanent revolution, the Trotskyist program as it applies to countries of combined and uneven development. This meant that the declaration did not probe areas in which one might likely discover differences, such as possible adaptations to Latin American nationalism or, for that matter, insufficient vigor in opposing the depredations of imperialism. Had we accepted the methodology of Norden and Negrete, we would have accommodated to a bogus "internationalism" in which claimed political agreement is simply a cover for the various national sections to carry out whatever opportunist line they see fit, varying according to the differing terrains on which they do work. As Trotsky noted:

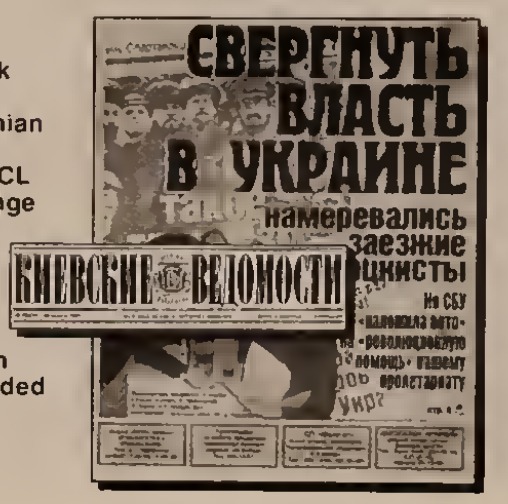
> "By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historical tasks. Opportunists find international control intolerable and they reduce their international ties as much as possible to harmless formalities...."
>
> —"The Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition" (September 1929)

The idea that fraternal relations are a testing process for solid programmatic agreement, requiring ongoing political struggle, was completely alien to Norden. For more than a year after we initiated fraternal relations with LM, there was no progress toward a programmatically based fusion. We then invited a leading representative of LM to an authoritative January 1996 meeting of our International Executive Committee. LM agreed on the need to transform itself from a trade-union fraction without a party into a Trotskyist propaganda group in Brazil, through an agenda of common work—publishing a party propaganda organ, extending LM's presence to a major metropolitan center and seeking to win new recruits from the younger generation. At this meeting we learned that a municipal workers union whose leadership was braintrusted by LM included a substantial proportion of cops. Indeed LM's slate in the union had received the vote of the majority of these same cops. We fought with LM to wage a campaign to get the cops out of the union and invested significant resources to maintain an ICL representative in Brazil.

After months of intensive discussion, it became clear that what LM/LQB wanted

WV Photo

1995 New York City protest against Ukrainian government witchhunt of ICL (left). Front-page Ukrainian newspaper (30 March 1995) smear: "Overthrow Government in Ukraine, Intended Touring Trotskyists."



CWI...

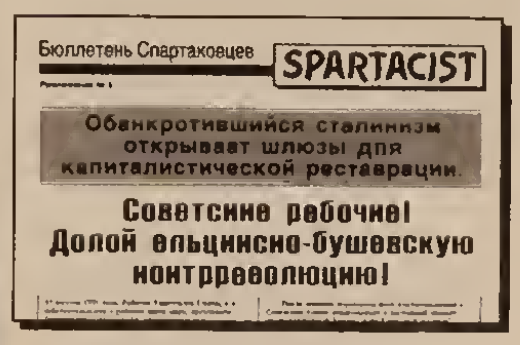
(continued from page 7)

Finding itself in the camp of imperialist-inspired counterrevolution was nothing new for this outfit. They opposed the Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan against CIA-backed Islamic reaction, hailed the clerical and anti-Semitic Solidarność "union" in Poland that sought to overthrow the Polish deformed workers state in 1981, and advocated the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 (see Spartacist pamphlet *Militant Labour's Touching Faith in the Capitalist State* [1994]).

From "Democratic" Counterrevolution to the "Red"/Brown Swamp

As Yeltsin's "democratic" capitalist *social counterrevolution* descended into economic collapse and ethnic slaughters, Russia's new ruling capitalist gangs increasingly portrayed these horrors as a *national degradation* inflicted by the usual suspects: foreigners, Jews, minorities, etc. This was the ideological basis for the emergence of the "red"/brown opposition coalition that encompassed everything from fascists and monarchists to so-called leftists. The International Communist League answered the rising brown tide by publishing an issue of our Russian-language *Byulleten' Spartakovtsev* especially devoted to the role of a Leninist party as the people's tribune, defending women, gays, Jews, minorities and oppressed nationalities, all the targets of the returning medievalist bigotry of Russia's benighted past. The Russian Militant swam *with* the brown tide, tailing after the main bastion of the "red"/brown coalition, the grotesquely misnamed Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), which was Russia's largest party.

Spartacist



ICL banner raised in Moscow at 1991 demonstration on anniversary of October Revolution. Historic ICL leaflet mass-distributed in USSR proclaimed: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!"

More recently, commenting on the 7 December 2003 Russian Duma (parliament) elections that handed the KPRF a severe defeat, the CWI's Rob Jones posted on their English-language Web site: "We...called on workers and youth to not support any of the parties supported by big business—including the CP—but called on workers to organise their own independent class organisations, to assist working class struggle" ("Election Victory for Pro-Putin United Russia Party," 10 December 2003).

This is another lie. The real position of the Russian Taaffeites, currently named "Socialist Resistance," is captured in their June 2003 Russian-language declaration, "Parliamentary Elections in Russia: The Orientation of Socialist Resistance." There the Russian Taaffeites hid behind the fact that there are two tiers of candidates in the elections, party-slate and individual. While for the party-slate tier they declared that "there is no way we could call for a vote to such a party" as the KPRF, for the individual candidacies they *endorsed voting for KPRF "worker" candidates*: "In each area, after candidacies are put forward, worker candidates (if there are such) will be selected from trade unions, the Russian Labor Party, the RKRP, *the KPRF* or other parties, that Socialist Resistance will support" (emphasis added).

Their declaration also reveals that the Russian Taaffeites had a standing policy of giving support (direct or indirect) to the KPRF:

> "In the previous Duma elections of 1993 and 1998, our slogan was, 'Not one vote to the Right!' This meant a call to not vote for bourgeois, that is, rightist parties, and logically, *to vote for a leftist party*. But how to determine what party is leftist? We answered as follows. Since you have made the conscious choice to not vote for bourgeois parties, make a second conscious choice. ***If you believe the KPRF is a leftist party—vote for it. And better yet, join it*** and verify if that is really the case.... We ourselves after all have no illusions in these parties; we believe that it is necessary to vote for a genuine Labor Party. There is no such party? That means it is necessary to build it! But today on the so-called left there in fact remains only one party—the KPRF." (emphasis added)

Electoral support to the KPRF is not a tactical question. The KPRF is on the other side of the class line. From its inception in 1993, the KPRF was always an outright bourgeois party, hostile to working-class actions. It was the main channel for diverting anger away from capitalist counterrevolution to racism and anti-Semitism—the "socialism of fools"—at home and behind Russian imperial ambitions abroad. In October 1998, when prominent KPRF leader General Albert Makashov repeatedly declared, "I will round up all the Yids and send them to the next world!" the KPRF-dominated Duma refused to even consider rebuking him. When the Chechen people won de facto independence by defeating Yeltsin's barbarous colonial-style First Chechen War of 1994-96, the KPRF *spearheaded opposition* to the Peace Treaty as a disgrace to Russian regional imperial ambitions in the Caucasus and Central Asia. By 2001, the KPRF ruled most of the Russian regions, and in 1998 a KPRF member was first deputy prime minister in Yeltsin's cabinet. The KPRF's party slate candidates in the 2003 Duma elections included one billionaire and 16 millionaires; among them were barons from Russia's then-largest oil giant Yukos, including the former chairman, Sergei Muravlenko! No class-conscious worker would have *ever* called for a vote to the despicable, bourgeois KPRF.

The Russian and Ukrainian CWI: In Bed with Fascists

The Taaffeites' adaptation to plebeian Russian nationalism led them far beyond the electoral arena of the KPRF. They courted and consorted with fascists in Russia and Ukraine! Peter Taaffe proclaims that the CWI is leading a movement *against* the National Bolshevik Party (NBP) fascists in Russia, because he *knows* how scandalous the CWI's real connection to them is. So Taaffe presents himself to the world on the Internet as having been a target of NBP disruption when he gave a speech in Moscow on May Day 1998:

> "The CWI at the time were heavily involved in an anti-fascist campaign whose main target was the so-called National Bolshevik Party led by Limonov—a right-wing nationalist organization which attracted a lot of youth by using radical, apparently left symbols such as Che Guevara but whose main ideologues were fascist. They use for example the Nazi armbands, the only difference being they have replaced the swastika with the hammer and sickle. When some of this group turned up at the meeting the Chair announced they would not be allowed to speak. Half way through the meeting they started heckling, accusing us of being Jews."
>
> —Peter Taaffe, *Militant's Real History*

Actually, Taaffe's problem at that meeting was not with the NBP, but rather with the fact that one of our comrades in attendance denounced the presence of the fascists and walked out in protest. The NBP was clearly invited. As we noted in our article "'Little England' Labourites Embrace Russian Fascists" (*WV* No. 696, 11 September 1998), the CWI distributed on May Day 1998 a grotesque appeal in *Levy Avangard*, the paper of its Russian group, titled "How to Understand the NBP." This sickening piece appeals to the fascists, "In which world do you want to live, my dear friend?" It then expresses "pity" for those fascists who want to preserve "everything in the form of an ever-rotating swastika." To those fascists who want to live "in a world of true Man, acknowledging reality," the article concludes with the invitation, "why are you still not with us?"

Taaffe now disputes our exposure of how they welcomed the fascists at their 1998 May Day forum. Here is an independent account of the incident, which was published in an anarchist journal:

> "After the session began, [G.], who was attending as a guest (representing a competing Trotskyist tendency, the 'Spartacists'), began to openly express indignation at the presence in the hall of members of the NBP. Calling them reactionaries and 'semi-fascists' (the only thing unclear was why only 'semi'), he declared that he was leaving the hall, not wishing to be in the same room with them. To our astonishment, the wrath of

continued on page 10

any impact in the post-Soviet order, expressed in ever more frequent broadsides against the ICL's supposed "abstract" or "passive" propagandism. In reality Norden saw elements of communist consciousness where none existed, leading to an increasingly desperate chase after alien social forces.

We have described this as "Pabloism of the second mobilization," referring to the liquidationist current that destroyed the Fourth International in the early 1950s. Faced with the onset of the Cold War and the creation of Stalinist-ruled deformed workers states in East Europe, the Pabloites denied the need to construct Trotskyist parties and instead sought to pressure the Stalinists to outline a "roughly" revolutionary course. Norden's latter-day Pabloism reflects despair over the destruction of the USSR and imperialist gloating over "the death of communism."

Building an international in the wake of the worldwide destruction unleashed by the collapse of the workers states in East Europe and the former Soviet Union is extremely difficult. There are no shortcuts. But there is no alternative, either. This struggle must be based on firm adherence to the Trotskyist program. The IG was conceived out of the rejection of the fight for Trotskyism. Their only grounds for complaint in Ukraine is that they thought they had purchased the exclusive rights to the services of some political hucksters, only to find out that the latter were simultaneously working for the competition.■

Pabloites of the Second Mobilization

In their article on the Kiev fiasco, the IG asserts: "The appearance of shady characters is particularly frequent after a defeat of the proletariat, when the workers movement is in a phase of decomposition. This is the situation today in the countries of the former Soviet Union." It is indeed likely that there is a link between what happened in Kiev and the fact of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR. But since its inception, the IG itself has made it a cardinal point of principle to deny the enormous negative impact that the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and East Europe has had on the consciousness of the working class of the world.

Our aim is the fight for new October Revolutions. But the disproportion between this purpose and the current political consciousness of the working class, youth and the left internationally is great. Today the mass of workers and even most leftists do not connect their struggles with the goal of proletarian revolution. For Norden, the gap between what we strive for and the current consciousness of the working class became a yawning abyss, leading him to defect from our organization.

In a letter to Norden a couple of months before his exit from our ranks, comrade Joseph Seymour pointed out:

> "I believe you do not accept that, beginning in the late 1970s, there has occurred a ***historic retrogression*** in the political consciousness of the working class and left internationally. This development both conditioned the counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc and has been reinforced by it. That's why we now encounter anarchists rather than ostensible Trotskyists or Maoists among the mainstream of young radicals in France....
> "The main point is that organizational affiliation follows from and is based on political understanding and agreement, which cannot be achieved at an arbitrary or forced-march pace. Stop trying to get rich quick. It ain't that kind of period."
>
> —"Norden's 'Group': Shamefaced Defectors from Trotskyism," *International Bulletin* No. 38, June 1996

Norden evidenced a deepening pessimism about the ability of our organization and its revolutionary program to have

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CWI...

(continued from page 9)

> the gathering fell not on the heads of the 'Natsbols' [National Bolsheviks], but on the 'disrupter of the peace.' On the faces of Trotskyists of other tendencies appeared smirks, and taunts of 'good riddance!' broke out; Mark, the comrade in arms of the historian Rogovin ([Northite] 'International Committee of the Fourth International'), declared, 'Good Bye!' One of the 'Limonovites' clearly said, 'Leprous Yid!' There was not the slightest reaction to this. There was no protest whatsoever from [leaders of the Russian CWI] Shibanov and Jones, who responded to the fascists' outburst with complete indifference. But then, when [G.] returned to the hall to take a couple of pictures of the National Bolsheviks in the hall, Shibanov jumped up and made for him, possibly wanting to seize the film. But the 'Spartacist' left the gathering in time."
>
> —Vladimir Sirogin, "May Day à la Trotskyists (Notes of an Eyewitness)," *Naperekor*, Summer 1998

The May 1998 meeting was not an isolated instance. Last year, the CWI conducted an ongoing dialogue with the NBP on a discussion page of the Russian CWI Web site titled "Question by a Natsbol to Marxists." When the NBP physically attacked local Taaffeites at a Revolution Day demonstration on 7 November 2003 in the city of Yaroslavl, the Russian CWI responded by opening yet another new discussion site. "Questions to Members of the NBP." Seeking a truce and a continuation of the online dialogue, the Taaffeites' postings included an assurance to the NBP: "We are not about to start up any wars."

This came amid escalating fascist attacks. Within days of the NBP attack on the Taaffeites, a dormitory at Moscow's Lumumba University erupted into flames (see "Racism and Capitalist Counterrevolution—Moscow Foreign Student Dorm Fire Kills 43," *WV* No. 818, 23 January). The students were under constant assault by skinheads, and many of them say the skinheads started the fire.

The Russian Taaffeites' pursuit of fascist youth may have yielded them no more than humiliation and beatings, but the Ukrainian CWI "Workers Resistance" (RS) ***actually collaborated openly with the fascists!*** On 15 February 2003, the day of coordinated international protest against the U.S. war in Iraq, the Ukrainian CWI posted on their official Web site a statement signed by them and, among others, the fascist Ukrainian Brotherhood (Odessa) [Bratstvo]. There is no ambiguity about the nature of this group. The Russian Taaffeites themselves, in a Web posting dated 6 April 2004, call Bratstvo "a fascistic organization," the Ukrainian analogue of the Russian National Bolshevik Party.

In Full View of the State

The impunity with which the CWI's Ukrainian franchise was able to carry out its scams is highly suspicious. The Russian, and especially the Ukrainian, bourgeois states persecute opposition movements with a vengeance. As we wrote, this is something we experienced directly:

> "We fought to the last barricades against Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution and fought to build a real organization in the USSR. And we paid the price. The Kremlin bureaucracy and then the capitalist regimes that replaced it knew the ICL was for real and witchhunted us with a vengeance. Our comrades were arrested, terrorized, attacked and hounded by the fascists and Stalinists alike. In 1992 the senior leader of the ICL's Moscow Station, Martha Phillips, was murdered at her post; the authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed her. In 1995, we were repressed and officially banned from Ukraine."
>
> —"Con Artists Get Conned—Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev," *WV* No. 808, 29 August 2003

The Ukrainian political police even carried out an old-fashioned book-burning of the Russian-language edition of Trotsky's *The Communist International After Lenin* that we published and extensively distributed throughout the former USSR. The ICL received statements of solidarity against our banishment from Ukraine from as far away as South Africa. But next door in Moscow, the CWI said nothing, and from its Ukrainian section, the silence was even more deafening.

Today the Ukrainian Security Service is at it again. This time it is not the Trotskyist ICL, but a murky "red"/brown youth organization in Odessa and Nikolaev that is charged with, among other things, plotting to overthrow the existing order. The eleven Russian and Ukrainian citizens rounded up in December 2002 have been subjected to such heinous tortures that four of them have attempted suicide, and one died of his injuries in November 2003. Yet Vernik and his ilk were able to operate with impunity for over 12 years in full view of the bourgeois state. What explains that? Either the *politics* of the Kiev CWI are as gentle to the Ukrainian bourgeois state as Peter Taaffe's call for control of the police by "democratic committees" in London, and/or their politics and practices are known to be fraudulent in multiple ways.

The corruption unearthed in the Taaffeites' Ukrainian and Russian groups is a damning indictment of the real program behind their orthodox-sounding phraseology. The cynicism of the Kiev con artists did not simply fall from the sky. It was nurtured by the CWI's pursuit of imperialist-backed "democratic" counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union. It is just as much a product of the CWI's systematic prostitution of Trotskyism as is their conciliation of openly fascist elements like the Russian National Bolshevik Party and Ukrainian Bratstvo. Exposing the Taaffeites' embrace of the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in the land of the October Revolution is part and parcel of the International Communist League's fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International.■

Spain...

(continued from page 5)

strike against the CNT-FAI headquarters.

The essence of this pathetic episode and the anarchist betrayal is perfectly described by Felix Morrow in the following quotation from his book, *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain* (1938):

> "Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden, during periods of reaction, by anarchist hatred of capitalist oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchist, being opposed to 'all dictatorships,' including dictatorship of the proletariat, will require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the capitalist outlook, to which he agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers."

Even one of the most radical anarchists, Buenaventura Durruti, a prominent military leader, expressed his desire "to accept the agreements only provisionally, that is to say until the freeing of Saragossa." When the plenum ended, the anarchists proposed that Companys create a Central Committee of Militias, which included representatives from the CNT and UGT trade-union federations, the PSOE and the POUM. However, it also included representatives from bourgeois parties like the Catalan Esquerra (Companys' party) and the Republican Union.

The Committee became, then, a tool for class collaboration and ultimate control by the Catalan government over the militias. A Marxist revolutionary party would have fought to ***expel the bourgeois representatives from the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias and for the centralization of the militias under the command of workers and soldiers committees.*** Durruti and his anarchist collective "Nosotros," inside the CNT-FAI, were aware of the dangers of class collaboration inside the Anti-Fascist Committee. However, they decided to follow its orders and, as promptly as July 24, a militia column, with Durruti at the head of it, was dispatched to the city of Saragossa to fight against the right-wing forces headed by Franco. In that way, Companys and the CNT bureaucracy got rid of the anarchist elements that could have caused problems for their alliance in Catalonia.

But what about the workers collectives? In Barcelona, workers collectives were created in thousands of enterprises, from key industries like shipping, mines, electric power, transportation, gas and water to others like perfumeries, breweries and small workshops. These workers collectives achieved outstanding economic goals, particularly in the industries that supplied munitions for the militias. But how did these cooperatives work? Gaston Leval, a prominent CNT militant and French anarchist, notes in *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* (1975):

> "Too often in Barcelona and Valencia workers in each undertaking took over the factory, the works, or the workshop, the machines, raw materials, and taking advantage of the continuation of the money system and normal capitalist commercial relations, organized production on their own account, selling for their own benefit the produce of their labour....
>
> "There was not, therefore, true socialisation, but a workers' neo-capitalism, a self-managment straddling capitalism and socialism, which we maintain would not have occurred had the Revolution been able to extend itself fully under the direction of our Syndicates."
>
> —quoted in "Leninism and Workers Control," *WV* No. 162, 17 June 1977

In other words, these autonomous committees functioned under the premise of competition for markets and suppliers. Those factories that had inherited advanced technology and abundant raw materials had better opportunities to compete in the market than did others which didn't have those conveniences. Such economic relations ultimately tended to recreate ***the conditions of a primitive form of market capitalism.***

These collectives were also centralized organs on a local level. In each workplace, an assembly of workers elected a committee, which would elect a manager to oversee the day-to-day running of the workplace. Within each industry there was an Industrial Council which had representatives of the two main unions (CNT and UGT) and representatives from the local committees, where the CNT and UGT were also prominent. However, bourgeois representatives from parties like the Esquerra and the Republican Left were part of these councils also. It is important to understand that in the absence of a planned, socialized economy, run by mass workers organizations (i.e., soviets), where left political parties could have full representation, what the CNT and UGT were doing was at best administering the workers collectives on behalf of the bourgeois popular front. Meanwhile, the government got ready to take the factories away from the anarchists and social democrats at the next opportunity.

Moreover, some of these committees depended heavily upon credits from banks and government subsidies. Nonetheless, the anarchists didn't have any plan to take control of the banks and ***they didn't do it***, which meant condemning those collectives dependent on bank credits to their ultimate disappearance. At the beginning of 1937, the government and the banks practically strangled these collectives, resorting to economic sabotage. The supply of raw materials was denied which ultimately stopped production in these factories.

As I said before, the CNT and FAI didn't see the phenomenon of workers management in the factories as a temporary condition, but as the realization of the anarchist economic ideal, autonomous productive units. In contrast, ***true revolutionaries would have resolutely defended workers management as a kernel of dual power. But they would have also called to oust the bourgeois representatives from the management of the collectives, while explaining that true socialization was only possible through a centralized, planned economy.*** A small group of Trotskyists called the Bolshevik-Leninist Section of Spain, affiliated to Trotsky's Movement for the Fourth International, issued a leaflet in January 1937 titled "Hail the Workers, Peasants and Combatants' Committees!" in the midst of the economic boycott against the committees. The leaflet read:

> "The bourgeois offensive against the committees must be responded to by strengthening them, forming them where they don't exist, extending their influence and coordinating between them in assemblies or congresses that study and resolve, independent of the bourgeois political power, those problems...posed by the necessities of the war and revolution.
>
> "It is fundamentally necessary that the committees resolve the problems of nationalization and centralization of the private banks, unified command and military discipline....
>
> "The committees...will take over leadership of the country, annulling the organs of the capitalist state...and establishing in their place the proletarian state based on the committees and on socialized property; establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie."
>
> —Agustín Guillamón, *Documentación histórica del trosquismo español (1936-1948)* (Ediciones de La Torre, 1996)

The Bolshevik-Leninists propagandized for a perspective to transform the workers committees into mass organs of workers power at a national level, as incipient organs of workers rule—i.e., soviets—where political debate would be open to all left tendencies. The situation of dual power couldn't last indefinitely; it had to be solved on the side of the workers or against them. The Bolshevik-Leninists had the program to solve it on the side of the proletariat. However, in January 1937 they were brand new and by May had only 30 people, without enough authority among the working class as a political tendency, although most of their leaders had fought in the POUM militias.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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German Spartacists Give Critical Support to Taaffeites in Rostock Elections

We reprint below a 27 May leaflet issued by the Spartakist Workers Party, German section of the International Communist League.

In the local elections in Rostock we Spartakists say: ***Vote SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks! No vote to the SPD and PDS!*** In the important issues of this election, the SAV [Socialist Alternative, German affiliate of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) of Peter Taaffe] is running as an independent proletarian alternative to the bourgeois workers parties PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] and SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany]. Their election campaign is oriented to the real needs of workers, refugees, leftists and also partially those of immigrants, and it draws a crude class line. A victory for the SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks is in the interests of all Rostock workers, leftists, unemployed people, women, immigrants and refugees. For example, they demand work and job training for all and a struggle against social cutbacks and sweatshop wages. They demand voting rights and equal rights for everyone who lives here. In their election statement they write, correctly: "No matter whether in Rostock, MV [Mecklenburg Vorpommern] or Berlin—everywhere the PDS is in government, they participate in cutbacks and layoffs." And regarding the PDS they say: "The PDS is not a socialist opposition."

The SAV candidacy in Rostock differs in one centrally important respect from their candidacy in Hamburg in February. In Rostock they draw a class line between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and give workers the chance to vote in their own class interests. That is why, in spite of criticisms, they are worth supporting. By contrast, in Hamburg the SAV ran together with the PDS and the petty-bourgeois ex-Green formation, Regenbogen [Rainbow], and subordinated themselves to Rainbow's anti-working-class program. Making deals with petty-bourgeois or even bourgeois formations is a trademark of the SAV and its co-thinkers internationally. In the elections in the U.S.A., they call for a vote to the bourgeois politician Ralph Nader, who has absolutely nothing to do with the working class. In Nigeria they are members of the purely bourgeois National Conscience Party (NCP). In fact, such "broadness"—achieved by unprincipled deals with anti-worker forces—cripples class struggle.

CORRECTION

In "Free Anarchist Sherman Austin!" (*WV* No. 821, excerpted in *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, Spring 2004), we wrote about a 24 January 2002 invasion of Sherman Austin's home by the L.A. Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI, the Secret Service, the LAPD and L.A. sheriffs. We stated, "The warrant also contained information detailing Austin's participation in demonstrations dating back to when he was 14 years old." In fact our source (*Revolutionary Worker*, 26 October 2003) stated that the warrant "described Sherman's participation in protests and demonstrations and contained information about him from when he was 14 years old!" It did *not* state that Austin participated in any political demonstrations dating back to when he was 14 years old.

Rostock is a city which has been devastated by the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the DDR [East German] deformed workers state 14 years ago. The SAV election statement outlines the desperate social situation: "The lights are going out in Rostock...." Mass unemployment is officially at 18.6 percent, and the future promises working people even more layoffs, social cutbacks and deeper poverty and degradation. And many of the SAV candidates are themselves affected by this. Who bears responsibility for the capitalist reunification in 1990? The SPD drove forward the counterrevolution in the East, while in West Germany they tried to prevent class struggle.

The [ruling Stalinists of the] SED-PDS attempted to hinder independent proletarian mobilization in the East and then went along with Gorbachev, then Soviet president, who at the end of January 1990 gave the green light to capitalist reunification. On January 30, the SED-PDS prime minister of the DDR, Hans Modrow, issued the government declaration "Germany United Fatherland." In 1989-90 in the DDR, we and the SAV were on opposite sides of the barricades. We fought for a proletarian political revolution in the DDR, for workers councils to take power. We said *no* to capitalist reunification. The SAV/CWI supported capitalist counterrevolution, e.g., with "SPD: Go on the offensive!"

The SAVers like to argue that this was only a mistake by their leadership of that time. But their current attitude to the DDR reveals this as an excuse. The counterrevolution in 1990 doesn't exist in the SAV election statement. The only time the SAV mentions the DDR they denounce it as having been a "Stalinist state." This means nothing other than equating the DDR deformed workers state with the Stalinist bureaucracy, which in the end choked it to death. The Stalinists were a parasitic bureaucratic caste; they didn't own the factories, which were the property of the working class. Today the SAV refuses to defend the deformed workers states of China and North Korea against capitalism.

The anti-Communist anti-Stasi [political police of the DDR] witchhunt of the '90s served to smash DDR industry; all leftist resistance to the destruction of millions of jobs was to be strangled. The SAV didn't defend a single individual against this witchhunt! We defended not only rank-and-file SED members or leftists, who were to be swept out of the way because they wouldn't eat crow. We also defended the ex-DDR bureaucrats because they were charged with the wrong crimes by the wrong class. The capitalist class brought charges against them because they represented the workers state which arose out of the Red Army smashing the Nazi regime. In its election program, the SAV reaches into the social-democratic bag of dirty tricks when it attacks Lochotzke, not as a capitalist but as an ex-member of the Stasi. The ugly campaign against supposed "DDR killer commandos" in the (then West German) DKP [Communist Party], which is being dredged up again, shows how dangerous the anti-Communist witchhunt is. This campaign is intended to intimidate the entire left. We say: Defend the DKP!

If life in socially devastated Rostock is bad for the residents in general, for refugees it is hell. The SAV election statement demands "Voting rights and equal rights for everyone who lives here" and "No deportation of foreigners from this city or anywhere else." For us, this is also an important reason why workers should vote for the SAV/Slate: to be able to fight for its own interests, the working class must actively fight the racist poison which is used by the capitalists to divide them. That's why we intervene into strikes and social protests with the key demand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and against the racist "war on terror," which is directed first against immigrants of Muslim background.

In its electoral program, the SAV calls for: "Not an inch to the fascists: instead, mass mobilization against Nazi parades by trade unions and anti-fascist organizations." But for them, mobilizations of the working class against the Nazis are not counterposed to rotten appeals to the bourgeois state to take action against the Nazis. So they are capable of explaining, just one paragraph earlier: "But the city, along with administrative-legal steps, should above all mobilize the Rostock population to prevent Nazi parades." The city or city administration is part of the bourgeois state, whose core is made up of the police, army and courts, as Marx and Lenin explained. It is not neutral. It serves the capitalist class. The Nazis serve the capitalists as a reserve army in case an insurrectionary proletariat threatens to slip out of social-democratic control and be no longer controllable by police and army. That's why the capitalists' state cannot be used to stop the Nazis.

The Nazi pogrom in the Rostock district of Lichtenhagen in the summer of 1992, under police protection, brutally demonstrated this. In their paper last year, the SAV supported cop "protests" in Hesse out of the same illusory faith in the class neutrality of the bourgeois-democratic state. As we explained, better working conditions for the police (like more brutal truncheons, better arms, larger cannons...) are squarely directed against the interests of workers, leftists and refugees who, after all, are directly repressed by these cops. Likewise, the SAV doesn't take a position against the racist campaign for a headscarf ban in Germany. In the March issue of *Solidarität* they report on their opposition to the headscarf ban in France, but take no position against it in Germany. But the same sort of racist campaign is taking place there as it is here. And especially in the quite anti-religious East, this progressive impulse of many workers and women is channeled into support for this racist law. The SPD, Greens and PDS hypocritically claim that their racist campaign against Muslim women has something to do with the separation of church and state, while in fact the state is very closely connected with the Catholic and Protestant churches.

On April 3, 500,000 people nationwide took to the streets against the social attacks by the capitalist SPD/Green government. In Berlin many were also against the SPD/PDS city government. Just one year earlier, there were mass protests against the U.S. war on Iraq. Instead of linking the protests last year against the Iraq war with a struggle against the imperialist government in Germany, they were criminally channeled by the trade-union bureaucracy and the fake left into support for the SPD/Green government. The result: On 14 March 2003, the day of the five-minute DGB [trade-union federation] action treacherously supporting the SPD/Green government, which, for its own imperialist motives, came out against the imminent U.S. attack on Iraq, Schröder announced Agenda 2010. But in the entire electoral statement of the SAV, imperialist war—a life and death question for the working class—plays no role, let alone the presence of Bundeswehr [German army] troops in Afghanistan and the Balkans. This considerably weakens their electoral campaign's political opposition to the SPD and PDS. You see black-red-gold [colors of German flag] SPD posters everywhere with "Power for peace—new strength." And the PDS proclaims: "Europe at the side of the UN, not in the shadow of the U.S.A." This foul chauvinist poison, which sells German imperialism as something better than its U.S. rivals, is intended not least to encourage acceptance of the government's social attacks and to justify the current colonial deployments of the Bundeswehr in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

The protests on 1 November 2003 and then on April 3 express the anger against the government attacks by the SPD and PDS. That's why we think it's important that the SAV candidacy in Rostock, with its crude line of class independence against the SPD and PDS, be successful so as to impel forward workers breaking away from the SPD and PDS to the left. But to really be able to fight in the interests of the working class, it's not enough just to be discontented with the anti-working-class politics of the SPD/PDS. The working class needs a revolutionary party and that means a revolutionary, internationalist and multiethnic workers party. We'll only be able to forge a party through a politically based split of social democracy. The SAV says in its election statement:

> "A new mass party of workers and youth would be a great step forward, ***even if at first it didn't stand for a consistent socialist program.*** It would give masses of workers and youth the chance of organizing independently of the bourgeois parties and of speaking up for their interests. The SAV stands for the unity of the working class and will support attempts at new, broad workers parties." (our emphasis)

This two-stage theory of the SAV for building a "socialist party" means in reality sucking up to the anti-Communists and other class traitors who are playing around in the diverse electoral alternatives to the SPD. This only leads us and the working class back into the social-democratic dead end which we're seeking a way out of.

The SAV election campaign against the SPD and PDS in Rostock represents a step in the right direction. That's why, for all our differences with the SAV, we say: *Vote SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks! No vote to the SPD and PDS!* ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Freedom Now for All the Detainees! Drop the Charges!

Mexico: Protest Police Repression Against Guadalajara Demonstration!

We print below a 2 June protest statement issued by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.

While the imperialist rulers of Europe and the lackeys of imperialism that head the capitalist governments of Latin America gathered in the city of Guadalajara [in the state of Jalisco], surrounded by a 100-meter-long and 3-meter-high steel fence, the repressive bodies at their service engaged in an orgy of violence against some of the 5,000 demonstrators who had gathered to protest against the Third Summit of Governments and Heads of State of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union. In the May 28 demonstration, the day the Summit concluded, several hundred riot police attacked the protesters with batons and shields, also using pressure hoses and releasing pepper gas, tear gas and toxic foam. Later, at nightfall, the police corps under the command of the local and federal PAN [National Action Party] governments launched a hunting spree to arrest whomever they could. After intoning triumphantly, "They're screwed. We won," the Public Security minister of the state [of Jalisco] told the press that 97 people had been arrested. As of now, the Guadalajara Independent Media Center reports that at least 49 people are still under arrest. Forty-five have already been sent to the federal maximum-security prison of Puente Grande (where Erika Zamora, a youth whose only "crime" was teaching indigenous people in Guerrero to read, remained imprisoned for years) and four minors were taken to a juvenile detention center. Bails to release the detainees go up to 200,000 pesos [more than US$17,000] (*La Jornada*, 2 June). Meanwhile, eight foreign protesters have already been deported to their home countries. The police are harassing hundreds of demonstrators who are still in Guadalajara demanding that their comrades be released. The Grupo Espartaquista de México demands: ***Freedom now for all the detainees! Down with the charges! No to deportations—Down with reactionary Article 33 of the Constitution!*** [Article 33 prohibits political activity by foreigners in Mexico.]

The Summit—whose objective was for the European imperialists to get their share in the plunder of Latin America and the Caribbean (traditionally the fiefdom of U.S. imperialism)—with breathtaking hypocrisy passed a resolution in which they claim to be "horrified by the recent evidence of mistreatment of prisoners in Iraqi jails." Hours later, however, the holding cells at the State of Jalisco Department of Justice became the stage for torture acts reminiscent of some of those that have characterized the colonial occupation of Iraq, in dungeons like Abu Ghraib. According to *La Jornada* (30 and 31 May), the detainees have been continously beaten, kept awake (those who fall asleep are kicked until they wake up again) and deprived of food and water. Women were stripped, insulted, threatened and forced to do leg squats before the uniformed thugs watching over them. During the previous days, the authorities had already orchestrated several provocations against demonstrators and arrested three of them, who were later freed. The Mexican rulers have two objectives: on one hand, they want to show their imperialist masters their resolve to keep Mexico a safe place for capitalist investment; on the other, they want to warn those who oppose the depredations of capitalism (and especially the powerful unions which have demonstrated against privatizations and the attacks against the retirement funds of the IMSS workers [the public health service for workers in the private sector]) that they're willing to resort to all kinds of violence to defend their interests and those of their imperialist masters.

La Haine

Guadalajara, May 28: Riot police brutally attack demonstrators protesting summit meeting of European and Latin American heads of state.

The bourgeois PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], trying to groom its "friend of the people" credentials, hurried to condemn "energetically the abusive use of public force" (resolution of the 16th Plenum of the 5th National Council). This takes a lot of cynicism, given that the May 28 operation against demonstrators is similar to the one that the [PRD] López Obrador government used in Mexico City to repress the October 2 demonstration [commemorating the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre] in 2003. That day, after observing the protest actions, the police initiated raids which, along with the people that had been kidnapped earlier that afternoon, ended with 75 people arrested. And, just like in Guadalajara, they were kept incommunicado and tortured in police stations and police vehicles. This underscores that besides being a rats' nest of corruption, as was evidenced by the recent scandals [involving top functionaries of the Mexico City administration], the PRD (just like the PAN and the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]) is a party irrevocably committed to defending the capitalist order and, therefore, to using the most brutal repression against those who question its crimes.

Furthermore, as has happened before, the media and the organizations around the PRD, like *La Jornada* and its slimy correspondent Jaime Aviles, have accused those who resort to anything more than cries and appeals to the imperialists of being provocateurs: "The provocateurs were clearly identified as members of the Frente Popular Revolucionario [Revolutionary Popular Front] and the Consejo General de Huelga [General Strike Council] of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). They violated the agreement reached on Thursday night between the Jalisco government and the unions and groups that took part in the peaceful, joyful and festive demonstration..." (*La Jornada*, 30 May). We strongly defend all those groups and individuals that mobilize in opposition to imperialist oppression against state repression and the slanders of those who strive to keep the protests within limits acceptable to the capitalists, despite the many political differences we have with such activists.

Some youth, frustrated by the futile appeals to the capitalists, resort instead to so-called "direct action" (direct confrontations with the repressive bodies of the state). These actions show a healthy hatred of the existing state of things and a heroic will to change it. However, as militant as they might be, they will never succeed in defeating the police, a force infinitely better trained and armed than any group of protesters. Furthermore, and more fundamentally, militant tactics cannot substitute for a strategy that offers a radical solution to eradicate oppression and exploitation forever. Misery and war do not come from a series of policies (whether they're called "globalization" or "neoliberalism") that can be modified, but from the everyday functioning of imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism, which has become more rapacious and dangerous since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. To bring imperialism to an end, what we need are not isolated confrontations with state bodies, but to destroy the *entire* state machinery of repression through a proletarian revolution, to replace it with a workers state in which those who labor rule. Only through the establishment of a planned economy worldwide can the needs of the population be satisfied and every kind of oppression be eradicated for good. ***For the defeat of imperialism through world socialist revolution!***

To achieve this aim, it is necessary to build parties of the working class around the world, independent in every way from the agencies and parties of capitalism, as part of a reforged Fourth International. These parties must act as "tribunes of the people," fighting to defend the interests of women, homosexuals, immigrants, indigenous peoples and the oppressed in general.

In Mexico, the main obstacle to the construction of such a party is nationalism, promoted overtly or covertly not only by the PRD, but also by the union tops (especially those of unions like the SME [electricians union] or those grouped in the UNT [an important union federation]) and most of the "revolutionary" left. In the struggle against imperialism, the oppressed in this country have no common interest with their Mexican exploiters, but there is instead the potential for them to forge a solid alliance with the proletariat and the oppressed in the imperialist centers, especially with the multiracial American working class.

With this perspective, we call for protests in support of the demonstrators who were repressed, and we especially call on the working class of Mexico and the world (the class with the objective interest and social power to defend all the oppressed and, especially, to bring the capitalist order to an end). ***An injury to one is an injury to all!*** ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 829 | GCU C-701 | 9 July 2004

We Need a Fighting Workers Party!

Break with the Democrats! No Vote to Nader!

The oddly demented George W. Bush administration's brutal invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, its "war on terror" at home, combined with scary Christian fundamentalism and crude war-profiteering, have generated disgust and dismay. It is not surprising that growing numbers of people view the upcoming presidential election as a referendum on the Iraq war and feel compelled to vote for "Anybody but Bush." The problem is you can't actually vote *against* the war, you have to vote *for* someone, and neither of the other two main rich white men running, Democrat John Kerry (richest man in the Senate millionaires' club) nor lawyer/small businessman Ralph Nader, speak for the interests of the working class and oppressed. While Kerry and the Democrats might have thought Bush's timing and unilateral launching of the Iraq invasion unwise, they understand that an immediate pullout would be a major defeat for the U.S. ruling class, and thus Kerry has vowed to stay the course. Nader's proposal for replacing U.S. troops with United Nations forces would merely continue the occupation of Iraq in different garb.

The awful machinery of the Pentagon will not stop grinding because a new man is in the White House. The American prison house for black people won't open, nor will factory owners, businessmen and bankers halt their relentless drive to maximize profits at the expense of the working class; nor will the cops, the armed thugs of capitalism, put down their guns. In Boston, where the Democratic National Convention (DNC) will be taking place, the cops shot in the back and killed a Roxbury black man, Bert W. Bowen, on June 27, then less than a week later killed a reportedly mentally ill Hispanic man, Luis Gonzalez, in his own home. Meanwhile, the citizens of Boston are treated like criminals and terrorists, as Boston transit has instituted a "random" search-and-seizure of passengers' bags! This is just a taste of what's in store for New York, where thousands of new cops have been sworn in to police the protesters against the Republican National Convention (RNC) in August.

Two faces of imperialist war in 2004 elections: George W. Bush carries out bloody colonial occupation of Iraq; Democrat Kerry calls for more U.S. troops.

Rock the Vote? Rock the System

The main organizers of rallies during the DNC focus on gently pressuring the Democrats, saving big protest for the RNC protests. One of the puppets for the Boston rallies represents a 70-foot backbone, supposedly to stiffen the Democrats' spine. The liberal *Nation* (7 June) quoted Boston activist Malia Lazu of the "League of Pissed Off Voters": "If you want to be an anarchist, that's fine, but then we'll all still be here. Could you just not be an anarchist on voting day?" There's a Punkvoter "Rock Against Bush" tour, while Def Jam founder Russell Simmons is working a "Rock the Vote" hip-hop angle. Pressure is being put on young people to vote "wisely" or they'll blow the whole process.

But the path to ending war, exploitation and oppression lies outside the electoral process, since you can't vote capitalism out of existence. An economic system based on private ownership and extraction of profit from the working people who produce the wealth is defended by the capitalist state—its courts, cops and prisons. This systematic force and violence is cloaked in the guise of "democracy," whereby you get to vote every four years for which capitalist party and politician will rule. To sweep away the whole rotten system, we need to build a fighting workers party which leads militant, integrated class struggle *outside the electoral framework* to smash capitalist rule and replace it with a workers government based on an egalitarian, socialist, planned, collectivized economy. The purpose of the Trotskyist Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs is to participate in social struggles with the aim of building the revolutionary party necessary to achieve this future; this also requires contesting against reformists and ostensible socialists who in deeds work to reconcile disaffected workers, minorities and youth to their class enemy and its bankrupt social order.

The two capitalist parties, or as Gore Vidal called them, the two wings of the Property Party, are deeply intertwined. Republican Ronald Reagan and a Democratic Congress cut taxes for the rich in the 1980s, while Democratic president Clinton and a Republican Congress in the 1990s slashed welfare—both parties unite in serving the needs of capitalism. Today, John Kerry doesn't even pretend to oppose most of Bush's policies. Kerry is *for* an additional 40,000 troops to Iraq; he was *for* the Patriot Act, which assaults civil liberties. He was *for* Clinton's 1996 Welfare Reform Act, which denied hundreds of thousands, mainly children, food or housing. He supports Israel's war against the Palestinian people, writing a paper titled "The Cause of Israel Is the Cause of America." Objectively, a vote for Kerry is a vote *for* these positions, despite the subjective intentions of antiwar voters.

All this, and more, the ANSWER coalition will tell you, since right now they are sponsoring two rallies at the DNC and RNC against "the twin parties of the war machine." But talk is cheap. In fact, what the ANSWER coalition did was run the Iraq antiwar protests straight

continued on page 8

Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

See Page Four

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Supreme Court Rulings—Partial Setback to Bush Administration

Free Jose Padilla and All the Detainees!

The following statement was issued by the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee on July 5. The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the SL.

On June 28, the Bush administration's efforts to institutionalize rule by presidential fiat ran into an obstacle when the U.S. Supreme Court declared that "a state of war is not a blank check for the president." In a plurality decision written by Justice O'Connor and joined by three others, the court held that Yaser Esam Hamdi, an American citizen taken into custody in Afghanistan in 2001, could not indefinitely be held as an "enemy combatant" without "notice of the factual basis for his classification" and a "fair opportunity to rebut the Government's factual assertions before a neutral decisionmaker." The court also ruled that he must be allowed some form of legal assistance.

Four other justices condemned Hamdi's incarceration, though reaching different conclusions as to what action the court should take. Justices Souter and Ginsburg found Hamdi's detention violated the 1971 Non-Detention Act, which declared that "[n]o citizen shall be imprisoned or otherwise detained by the United States except pursuant to an Act of Congress." But rather than call for his release, they concurred with the court's ruling sending Hamdi's case back to the lower courts for further proceedings. Arch-conservative Scalia, joined by the liberal Stevens, dissented on the grounds that since Congress never voted to suspend *habeas corpus*, Hamdi must either be formally charged with a crime or released. Scalia declared, "The very core of liberty secured by our Anglo-Saxon system of separated powers has been freedom from indefinite imprisonment at the will of the Executive."

In another setback for Bush & Co., the court ruled by a six-to-three majority that the 600 detainees held in Guantánamo had a right to file *habeas corpus* petitions challenging their imprisonment. Justice Stevens' decision rejected the government's flimsy contention that American courts have no jurisdiction because the base is on Cuban territory. At the same time, by a five-to-four majority, the court dismissed the claim of Jose Padilla—another American citizen picked up at Chicago's O'Hare airport in 2002—on the outrageous pretext it was filed in the wrong federal district court.

Had the court adopted the government's case in its entirety, it would have eviscerated 200 years of American constitutional law giving the courts judicial oversight of executive branch decisions. In *amici curiae* (friends of the court) briefs submitted on Padilla's behalf in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and later in the Supreme Court by the Marxist Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee, we noted, "What the President asserts is nothing less than the right to disappear citizens.... This is an unprecedented assertion of imperial powers by the President. The District Court's deference to the President's determination of Padilla's status as an enemy combatant relegates to the President the role of sole arbiter of the exercise and applicability of democratic, constitutional rights. This is consonant with the rationale of a police state."

Any impediment to the government's police state designs is welcome, but the Court's decisions were far from the "emphatic repudiation" of the Bush administration the ACLU claimed them to be. Though upholding some limits on presidential power, the Court's decisions recognize a right of due process and *habeas corpus* so truncated that in any other context, these decisions would be seen as consistent with the wholesale shredding of these protections. The dismantling of these rights began under Democratic president Clinton and has been carried forward with a vengeance by Bush. In Hamdi's case, the lead decision not only affirms the government's claim of authority to declare Hamdi an "enemy combatant," but permits the government to base its case against him solely on hearsay evidence. Casting aside the presumption of innocence that is the underpinning of due process, O'Connor declares, "The Constitution would not be offended by a presumption in favor of the Government's evidence."

The "neutral decisionmaker" envisioned by the Court includes kangaroo courts like the military tribunals set up by Rumsfeld. In affirming the Guantánamo detainees' right to file *habeas corpus* petitions, the Court evaded the question of whether even the minimal protections accorded to Hamdi would apply to them as well. Nor did the justices touch the question of citizenship rights in either the Padilla or Hamdi cases. But with an administration that sees its actions as not merely above the law ***but the law itself***, the Supreme Court has sent a message to the Bush regime that it can't do whatever it wants—at least not yet.

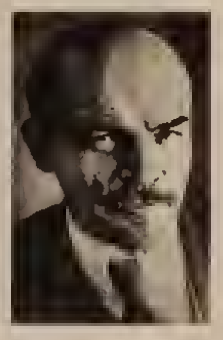
The Court's reluctance to decide Padilla's case can be traced to its endorsement of the government's bogus "war on terror." While the Court held that the government has the authority to prevent "enemy combatants" from returning to the field of battle while fighting continues, Afghanistan in Hamdi's case, a ruling on Padilla's claim would compel the Court to confront the administration's claims that the "battlefield" in the "war on terror" is everywhere and its duration eternal. As we wrote in the *amici* brief: "The 'war against terrorism' is a fiction, a political construct, not a military reality. It is a political crusade conducted in the name of ridding society of a perceived evil. It is no more a 'war' in a military sense than 'war against cancer,' 'war against obesity' or a 'war against immorality.' Like the 'war against communism' and the 'war against drugs,' this 'war' is a pretext to increase the state's police powers and repressive apparatus, constricting the democratic rights of the population."

From the outset of the "war on terror," we have insisted that the government's repressive measures, directed initially at Muslims and immigrants, and trampling on political dissent along the way, would necessarily broaden, with its ultimate targets being the multiracial labor movement and black people. This was borne out by the detentions of American citizens Padilla and Hamdi. As our brief stated, "The treatment of Padilla is intended as both the precursor and legal justification for application of Executive unilateral prerogatives on a broader scale, denying due process protections in criminal prosecutions, immigration proceedings and civil challenges to government policy. It is a frontal assault on the very concepts of due process and citizenship itself.... The target of the Executive is any and all perceived opponents of government policy."

The democratic rights under attack today were won through centuries of struggle and revolution—the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the U.S. Revolutionary War, the French Revolution, American Civil War, pitched labor battles of the 1930s and the mass movement against Jim Crow segregation. And they must be defended as well through the struggles of black people, immigrants and defenders of civil liberties welded to the power of the multiracial labor movement. ■

Lessons of the Spanish Civil War

TROTSKY



LENIN

We translate below excerpts from a 1937 leaflet issued by the Spanish Trotskyists on the eve of the Barcelona May Days workers revolt. This took place almost a year following the heroic workers uprising known as the July Days of the Spanish Civil War. The combative Spanish proletariat had risen up against Franco's coup attempt, posing point-blank the necessity of the proletariat to seize state power. But the treacherous leadership of the working class subordinated the masses to the popular-front government, paving the way for the ultimate triumph of Franco's reactionary forces.

On July 19 the proletariat lacked the revolutionary leadership that is indispensable for the conquest of political power, of state power.

The far left organizations were not prepared to defeat the bourgeois state. Anarcho-syndicalism rejected, completely, the necessity for political power: set against the bitter reality, this theory has led some of its chiefs to demean themselves as servants of the bourgeois state instead of erecting the proletarian state. Nor was there, or is there, an authentically Marxist vanguard. On the other hand, the reformist movement unmasked itself as the principal prop of the liberal, that is, capitalist, bourgeoisie....

"Without world revolution, we are lost," said Lenin. This is even truer for Spain; furthermore to lead the world proletariat to insurrection we must get ahead of them with our own example....

War and revolution are inseparable, or more exactly, the war cannot be won without the revolution, or even more precisely: only the dictatorship of the proletariat can win the war.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat?

The domination of the immense majority over the exploiting minority, the concentration of the revolutionary forces for military, political and social victory over the reaction, the definitive rupture with the bourgeois past.

Who will make up the proletarian dictatorship?

The democratic organs of the masses, the workers, peasants and fighters councils, their assemblies and congresses of local, regional and national delegates, their revolutionary executive committees. The unions must organize the economy, but the whole class has to take the fate of society into its hands.

The emancipation of the working class can only be carried out by the working class itself.

DOWN WITH THE BOURGEOIS REPUBLIC!
LONG LIVE THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT!

—"Against Fascism and Bourgeois Reaction; *Dictatorship of the Proletariat!*"
Bolshevik-Leninist Section of Spain (for a Fourth International),
Barcelona, 1 May 1937

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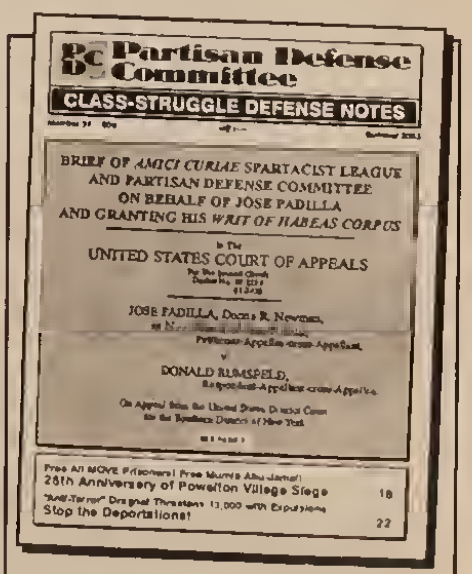

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Government "Terrorism" Frame-Up Threatens Everyone

Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!

On June 22, the government's sinister frame-up trial of leftist attorney Lynne Stewart, her translator Mohammed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar began in Manhattan's old federal courthouse. The seven-count indictment is a bombshell of charges wrapped around the lie that the defendants conspired to defraud the U.S. government and "provide and conceal material support and resources to terrorist activity." Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar are not guilty of any crime. All three face decades in prison if convicted.

Lynne Stewart, a leftist lawyer and 64-year-old grandmother, had the courage to provide legal defense as a court-appointed attorney for Egyptian sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, a reactionary Islamic fundamentalist cleric. The sheik, a blind diabetic with heart trouble, was imprisoned for life on charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Lynne Stewart continued to fight on behalf of her client and against his extraordinary and draconian prison conditions. For this, Stewart, Yousry and Sattar are themselves now smeared as accomplices to "terrorism."

This case is a loaded gun the federal government has aimed at *everyone* in America. At issue is whether attorneys have the right to provide legal defense for anyone with unpopular views without being accused of the crime themselves. At issue is whether anyone accused of a crime has the right to legal defense, the right to free speech and association, to publicize their views to the world outside the jail cell, or even the right to receive news of the world beyond the prison walls. This case is being prosecuted by the same capitalist rulers who ordered torture and maintained that their victims in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo had no right to legal defense (see related article, page 2).

AP

Leftist attorney Lynne Stewart with her husband, Ralph Poynter.

The government is trying to set a deadly precedent with this case by targeting the attorney of a Muslim cleric whose rights they think nobody will care about. Because they have the courage to represent sheik Adbel Rahman, Lynne Stewart and co-defendants are smeared by the government as guilty by association. We are atheistic communists who hailed the entry of the Red Army in Afghanistan against the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*. Thus we are stalwart opponents of the views of an Islamic cleric like sheik Abdel Rahman. But we oppose any enhancement of the capitalist state's machinery of repression because it will be used against the labor movement and the left.

Think of the implications: if Lynne Stewart is found guilty for defending a right-wing Islamic fundamentalist and conveying his views, what would stop the government from repressing its opponents on the left side of the political spectrum? Could Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, framed as a "cop killer" and now writing from death row, be next? The FBI tagged the Black Panther Party as "terrorist" and 38 Panthers were shot dead while hundreds more were railroaded to prison under the deadly COINTELPRO counter-intelligence program. Could the government rule it a "criminal conspiracy" to publish Mumia's columns, fight for his freedom and the abolition of the racist death penalty? Could one be accused of "material support to terrorism" for publishing or buying his books or broadcasting his powerful voice? Could a union leadership be charged as co-conspirators in "terrorism" for rightly defending a union militant arrested for stopping scabs with an effective picket line?

Uncle SAM and Big Brother

None of the defendants are charged with knowledge, planning or participation in any of the following crimes: the bombing

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For a National Unionization Campaign!

Port Truckers Strike East, Gulf Coasts

Coming some two months after the May West Coast port truckers strike, hundreds of non-union, heavily black and immigrant independent truck drivers struck last week at ports throughout the East and Gulf coasts in a fight against rising fuel costs, grinding exploitation and anti-union laws. On June 28, the strike was 90 percent effective at Port Newark, New Jersey, one of the country's principal container ports. At the Port of Charleston, the country's fourth-busiest container port, 80 percent of the truckers participated in the strike. Scores of protesting truckers demonstrated at the ports of Newark, Charleston, Savannah, Miami and New Orleans. By June 30 most picketers had returned to work, but the Port of Miami remained virtually shut down, and Charleston truckers continued their strike until the end of the week.

Charleston truckers struck two days earlier on June 26, and the picket lines were honored by railway workers at the CSX rail yard, shutting the yard down for most of the day. Bill Campbell, elected spokesman for the Charleston port truckers, told *WV* of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) "giving us water, food for the cookout, coming to speak to the drivers, letting them know how important this labor movement was and that we set history down here in South Carolina sticking together." Yet the ILA undercut the port truckers strike by continuing to work ships behind the truckers' pickets.

The drivers who transport containers on and off the docks are treated like dirt. Paid by the load, they typically work 60-hour weeks for the equivalent of less than $8 an hour, with no benefits. The drivers are forced to use chassis (wheeled flat trailers) owned by the terminals and shipping companies, which don't give a damn about maintaining the brakes, tires and overall safety. They have to wait long, unpaid hours because the bosses prefer to save money by stacking containers in high piles on the ground instead of loading them directly onto road-worthy chassis. Although there are record levels of cargo, most port truckers struggle to eke out an existence.

AP

Truckers picketing Port of New Orleans, June 28.

Port truckers are victims of a system that gutted unionization, replacing unionized workers with owner-operators after deregulation of the trucking industry in 1980. Many drivers had to buy their own rigs and absorb the cost of insurance, fuel, maintenance and other operating expenses. A trucker in Norfolk, Virginia declared: "It's a situation where I'm not sure if I should put tires on the truck, buy fuel or [put] food on the table. Try and tell that to your kids."

The strike in late June, though involving only a fraction of the 50,000 port truckers nationally, was an impressive demonstration of social power. Unionization is key to harnessing this power for the direct benefit of the port truckers. A successful campaign to organize port truckers nationally would give the union-organized workers control of each link in container shipments, from the docks to the highways and rail yards. Because they are owner-operators, the port truckers are deemed by the shipping bosses and the courts to be independent businessmen subject to federal price-fixing laws, thereby prohibiting them from unionizing. Typical was the January 2000 decision by a California superior court in L.A. that ruled that port truckers were "independent contractors." Such union-busting schemes hark back to the 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act, supposedly directed against capitalist monopolies but used for decades to break strikes.

Port truckers have real social power. An article in the 17 May issue of the *Journal of Commerce* noted, "Shippers could face a long, hot and tense summer if recent protests by container truckers at the ports of Oakland, Los Angeles-Long Beach and Norfolk are any indication." In fact, following the West Coast strike this May, many port truckers made some real gains, including 15 percent or more increases in the amount paid per container load by some companies.

In December 2001, the Teamsters, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the ILA announced an alliance to organize port truckers. Organizing the port truckers is a basic requirement for working-class unity on the docks. As a result of their experience in the 2002 lockout, some West Coast longshoremen are starting to recognize that the fight to organize the port truckers is in their interest. Indeed, organizing the port truckers would open the road to uniting all dock workers into one industrial waterfront union coast to coast and beating back the capitalists' divide-and-conquer strategy. Such a perspective would require mobilizing union power on behalf of the port truckers.

But the Teamsters, ILA and ILWU have made no real effort to organize the country's port truckers. In fact, Teamster-organized "SeaLogix" truckers were seen working during the Oakland strike this spring (see "Support and Organize the Port Truckers!" *WV* No. 826, 14 May). And the ILWU bureaucracy has sought to take away a portion of the port truckers' work to give to the ILWU longshoremen. On the other hand, a *WV* sales team was told that on June 28, Teamsters stickers were distributed by the ILWU at the Local 10 union hall in the Bay Area calling to "Free the Oakland 3," port truckers who were facing a lawsuit stemming from the May strike. A port trucker told *WV* that he thought the suit was dropped

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Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

We conclude below a slightly edited presentation by Spartacist speaker Adrian Ortega at a Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club public educational in New York City on April 3. Part One of this talk appeared in WV No. 828 (11 June).

PART TWO

With the armed proletariat in the militias and the workers committees growing at a great rate, the capitalists were afraid of a new workers radicalization like that of July. In September 1936, in order to appease the workers, Azaña appointed a new cabinet in his government with the PSOE [Socialist Workers Party] and UGT [General Workers Union—affiliated to the Socialists], the PCE [the Stalinist Communist Party] and the bourgeoisie. In Catalonia, the anarchists for the first time joined the government; and two months later, they entered the national government. In Catalonia, the popular-front government also included the POUM [the centrist Workers Party of Marxist Reunification] for four months. That is, the Spanish left groups with significant influence in the working class sealed their alliance with the bourgeoisie.

Augusti Centelles

Leftist militiaman fight Francoist forces on Aragon front, 1937.

What was the internal functioning of the CNT [the anarchist National Confederation of Labor] and the FAI [the political arm of the CNT] at the time? Miguel Amorós explains in his book *La revolución traicionada: La verdadera historia de Balius y Los Amigos de Durruti*:

> "The plenums didn't take into account the assemblies of the unions and ignored the opinion of the militias. Against every norm of the confederation, it was the committees who called on them and elaborated the agenda, which was not always communicated to the delegates. The delegates attended without a mandate and without knowing what they were going to discuss or the relevance of decisions to be adopted."

The CNT and FAI bureaucracies, sharing power with the bourgeoisie, started going after those anarchists who criticized the corrupt methods of the leadership. Such anarchists included the writer Jaime Balius, a future leader of the Friends of Durruti group who was ousted from *Solidaridad Obrera* (Workers Solidarity—the CNT's main paper) in December of 1936 along with other members of the editorial staff. How about that for "anti-authoritarian organizations"?

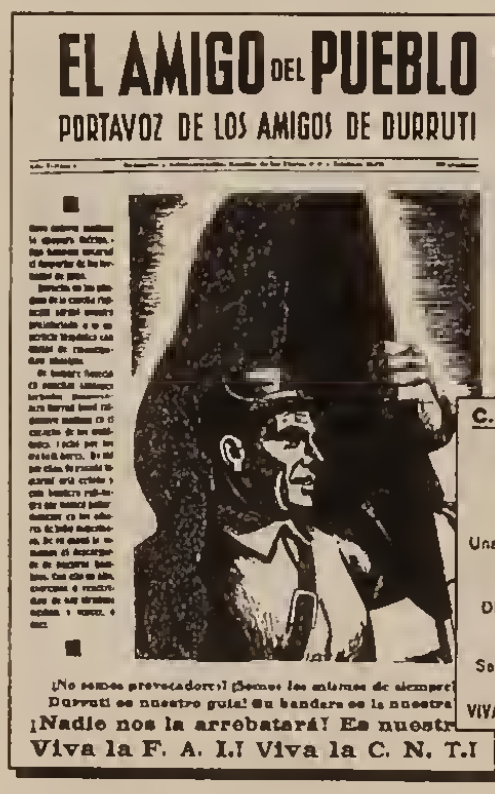
Now I'll read another quote:

> "As soon as they were faced with a serious revolutionary situation, the Bakuninists had to throw the whole of their old programme overboard. First they sacrificed their doctrine of absolute abstention from political, and especially electoral, activities. Then anarchy, the abolition of the State, shared the same fate.... They then dropped the principle that the workers must not take part in any revolution that did not have as its aim the immediate and complete emancipation of the proletariat, and they themselves took part in a movement that was notoriously bourgeois. Finally they...sat quite comfortably in the juntas of the various towns, and moreover almost everywhere as an impotent minority outvoted and politically exploited by the bourgeoisie."

Is this Leon Trotsky on 1936? No, it is Friedrich Engels polemicizing against the Spanish anarchists in 1873! Anarchism was, is and will always be class collaborationist at its core.

But not all the anarchists in Spain in 1936-37 shared the class collaborationism of the CNT-FAI bureaucracy. The Friends of Durruti group organized in opposition to that treachery. The CNT-FAI, in an attempt to better consolidate the forces against Franco's right-wing reactionaries, began to acquiesce to, and carry out, the "militarization" of the proletarian militias in September of 1937. This meant putting the militias under the orders of a centralized *bourgeois* army. The Republicans ordered the militarization of the militias, and the Socialist and anarchist ministers in the popular front voted for it. The majority of the members of the Friends of Durruti came from the thousands of anarchist militants who refused to submit to the militarization. Pablo Ruiz, who had fought with Buenaventura Durruti himself on the front, represented one wing of the group, and the prominent writer Jaime Balius represented another.

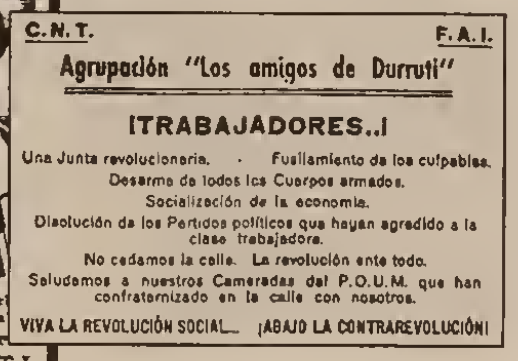
The four thousand members of the Friends of Durruti stood against the class collaborationism of the CNT-FAI and counterposed to it the call for revolution. They defended this by pointing out that "all revolutions are totalitarian." They raised the call for a "Revolutionary Junta!" According to Amorós, this was a variant of the concept advocated by the CNT of a "National Committee of Defense" in the face of the failure exhibited by the decentralization of the militias against Franco. The Friends of Durruti were CNT workers and militiamen who faced the prospect of being disarmed under the orders of their anarchist leadership. Their opposition to class collaboration was the empirical conclusion of their direct experience with the forceful "militarization" of the militias. However, this didn't contradict their affiliation to the CNT since the anarchist ideal of libertarian communism, a stateless society based on a decentralized economy run by local workers committees, was something that still looked feasible to them. However, the Friends of Durruti's political positions were in motion, like those of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists who witnessed and embraced the 1917 Russian Revolution. The Friends of Durruti learned from the negative example of the CNT; but they first had to break with their anarchist prejudices against the Leninist vanguard party and the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to fully embrace a revolutionary program. That opportunity presented itself in May 1937.


EL AMIGO DEL PUEBLO

PORTAVOZ DE LOS AMIGOS DE DURRUTI

¡Nadie nos la arrebatará! Es nuestr

Viva la F. A. I.! Viva la C. N. T.!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Agrupación "Los amigos de Durruti"

¡TRABAJADORES..!

Una Junta revolucionaria. · Fusilamiento de los culpables.

Desarme de todos los Cuerpos armados.

Socialización de la economía.

Disolución de los Partidos políticos que hayan agredido a la clase trabajadora.

No cedamos la calle. La revolución ante todo.

Saludamos a nuestros Camaradas del P.O.U.M. que han confraternizado en la calle con nosotros.

VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN SOCIAL... ¡ABAJO LA CONTRAREVOLUCIÓN!

Left: First issue of left anarchist Friends of Durruti's newspaper, *El Amigo del Pueblo* (Friend of the People), depicting Buenaventura Durruti. Below: Group's 5 May 1937 leaflet calling for a "revolutionary junta," concludes with, "Long live the social revolution! Down with the counterrevolution!"

The Barcelona May Days

Almost a year had passed after the "July events" in Barcelona when on 3 May 1937 the government decided to take the Telefónica building out of the hands of the CNT workers who ran it. Assault Guards commanded by the Stalinist Rodriguez Salas arrived at the building and, on behalf of the popular front, ordered the workers to abandon it. Workers put up resistance and the exchange of fire began. The word of an attack on the Telefónica spread like wildfire. In four hours a general strike was declared and the city was engulfed in street fighting with barricades being formed, as during the "July events," by workers of the CNT-FAI, the left-POUM and, this time, the Friends of Durruti and the Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninists.

The CNT-FAI tops and the popular-front government sent Garcia Oliver and other CNT bureaucrats from Valencia to order the workers back to their homes. He urged the workers: "Hold your fire; embrace the Assault Guards!" The POUM defended their headquarters at the Hotel Falcon from the Assault Guards but refused to take any step forward. The local leaderships of the CNT and POUM met that night, but the anarchist bureaucracy insisted on no more than the dismissal of Salas and the formation of a new government in order to stop the confrontation. The workers had a different agenda though, pushed by their instinct of class self-defense.

On May 4, Barcelona was under the control of the workers, except for the center of the city, where the battles continued until dusk. One of the first workers detachments in the early hours of that night was 400 Friends of Durruti fighters who occupied the whole of Las Ramblas Avenue and patrolled the surrounding area. The same day, the Bolshevik-Leninists handed leaflets to the workers on the barricades that called for a "General strike in all the industries that don't work for the war" and for the "arming of the working class." Workers desperately needed a leadership!

Cambio 16

Madrid, 1939: Generalissimo Franco presides over victory parade. Popular front paved way for rise of Falangist reaction in Spain.

The Friends of Durruti met with the Executive Committee of the POUM and apparently acquiesced to the POUM's position that the movement was lost given the CNT's capitulatory actions. Both agreed on seeking guarantees against retaliations before the workers began to abandon the barricades. However, the next day the Friends of Durruti issued a leaflet which caused a hue and cry among the CNT-FAI bureaucracy, calling for a revolutionary junta, the disarming of the armed bodies (meaning the Assault and Civil Guards) and the socialization of the economy. The leaflet was received with great enthusiasm on the barricades. Needless to say, the Friends of Durruti had used extremely "authoritarian" measures to get their leaflet printed in the middle of a general strike! Balius describes the scene as follows:

> "We banged on the door until the owner [of the print shop] came out, who didn't want to know anything and refused categorically to open the print shop. He promptly backed up in the face of 'armed violence'.... Just before midnight...we were able to take with us four to five thousand leaflets still wet."

Still on May 5, the local bureaucracy of the FAI in Barcelona, in another despicable act of betrayal of the working class, refused reinforcement by militias ready to leave the front. But even worse than that, the CNT workers committees started to abandon the barricades, obeying the call of the top bureaucracy.

On May 6, various anarchist groups, including the Friends of Durruti, met with the POUM. The POUM held a minority position, which was for the creation of a "revolutionary central committee." This was against the local representatives of the anarchist committees, who, following orders from their national leadership, advocated withdrawal from the barricades.

What was the response of the POUM? Let's have their leader Gorkin tell the story:

> "But we couldn't impose our views. It was the representative of the Regional Committee [Nacional] who they [the workers] were listening to.... The Friends of Durruti advocated a CNT-FAI-POUM government. Due to tactical reasons we didn't attack the leadership of the CNT."
>
> —Quoted in Amorós,
> *La revolución traicionada*

I want to emphasize some points here. During the May Days, the CNT carried out a contemptible and clear betrayal against the working class in Barcelona, as they had already chosen to collaborate with the bourgeoisie. The centrist POUM knew this, and instead of fighting against it, they buried their heads in the sand like ostriches and waited for the CNT to give the order to disband. The Friends of Durruti, in contrast, called for a local junta centered on the CNT and the POUM. ***Had there been an authoritative revolutionary leadership then, it would have taken up the Friends of Durruti's call for a junta and transformed it first into a military united front*** against the bourgeois forces and the Stalinists ***and then into the core of a workers government*** to fight the counterrevolution with an internationalist program. It would have called for independence for Morocco in order to undermine Franco's army and appealed to the workers on the other side of the Pyrenees to follow their example.

Leon Trotsky and Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists fought against popular-front betrayal, for workers revolution in Spain.

After the May 6 meeting, Balius proposed that CNT workers advance a column to the town of Tarragona and bring reinforcements to Barcelona. Predictably, the CNT bureaucracy boycotted this proposal. Amorós explains: "The Friends of Durruti couldn't understand why the CNT committees had stopped the fight, when victory was so close." The Friends of Durruti didn't have the understanding that flows from a revolutionary program—the understanding to realize the dead end of anarchism and to politically break with the CNT. ***That had to be the role of a Marxist vanguard party.***

Unfortunately, the Bolshevik-Leninists didn't have the time to generate roots in the proletariat during the few months of their existence and they lacked authority among the working class. However, the power of their Trotskyist program is shown by the fact that despite their small numbers they were one of the first to be targeted by the Stalinists and the bourgeois reactionaries once the proletariat was defeated and the barricades were brought down. Before the May Days, the Friends of Durruti helped to distribute the Trotskyists' press on the streets and made their offices available to the Bolshevik-Leninists to organize their meetings. However, the Bolshevik-Leninists didn't achieve much in a meeting with the Friends of Durruti's leadership on May 5:

> "Every time the word Authority was pronounced...Balius got mad. The interview or meeting ended without discussing the real problems at bottom.... As for Balius, Carlini and others—not everybody—to continue the fight only on the barricades was the just position, and that is how we split."

Under the orders of the CNT-FAI, and in the face of the POUM's prostration, the workers were ultimately demobilized and defeated. Five hundred died and over a thousand were wounded during the May events. Following the defeat, the state, with the aid of the Stalinists, launched its persecution, imprisonment and murder of the Trotskyists and POUMists (the latter on charges of "Trotskyism"). The anarchist bureaucracy proceeded to attempt the expulsion of the Friends of Durruti from the CNT ranks; meanwhile, the government censored the CNT's paper *Solidaridad Obrera*. The POUM's paper, *La Batalla*, was banned and its main leader, Andrés Nin, as well as anarchist leader Camilo Bemeri, died at the hands of the Stalinists.

During the Franco dictatorship, 300,000 workers and peasants were assassinated and many others were locked up in concentration camps. All working-class leaders were exterminated or expelled, political and trade-union groups and associations were dissolved. The popular-front government paved the way for Franco's triumph in 1939. One of the greatest revolutionary opportunities for the international proletariat had been drowned in blood.

Anarchists proclaim that the Friends of Durruti never broke with the principles of anarchism. Unfortunately, they are right. They continued to believe, as their leaders in the CNT did, that a classless society could be created simply through force of will; that such a society could be created without first establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, a centralized democratic workers state to suppress the forces of counterrevolution. Anarchist historian Vernon Richards, in his book, *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution (1936-1939)* [second enlarged edition, 1972], expresses the ultimate consequences of such an idealist perspective:

> "We believe there is something more real, more positive and more revolutionary in resisting war than in participating in it; that it is more civilised and more revolutionary to defend the right of a fascist to live than to support the Tribunals which have the legal powers to shoot him; that it is more realistic to talk to the people from the gutter than from government benches; that in the long run it is more rewarding to influence minds by discussion than to mould them by coercion."

Marxists, on the other hand, reject the false arguments of anarchists that classless communism is simply the product of a psychological regeneration. We fight to overthrow the capitalist system in order to organize production so as to raise it to such a high level that scarcity will no longer exist. Only then can we lay the material basis for the emancipation of humanity from exploitation, war and poverty. We tell anarchist youth today, as Trotsky said to the international proletariat in *Lessons of October* (1924): "Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer." This is the main lesson of the Spanish Civil War. ■

Stewart...

(continued from page 3)

of the World Trade Center in 1993 or its destruction in 2001; the 1997 murders of some 60 tourists at an archeological site in Luxor, Egypt; the kidnapping of foreign hostages in the Philippines in 2000; the bombing of the USS *Cole* in Yemen in 2000. Yet outrageously, the prosecution has been allowed to enter as "evidence" a September 2000 video tape of Osama bin Laden calling for the sheik's release, as well as testimony and transcripts pertaining to the other events, because it is alleged that the perpetrators were linked to the Egyptian "Islamic Group," with which the sheik is linked, with whom Lynne Stewart is linked as his attorney!

The prosecution is pushing hot buttons with the jury, smearing Stewart and co-defendants as accomplices to bin Laden in a lower Manhattan courthouse just a few blocks from the huge pit where the World Trade Center once stood. Fairness and logic should dictate that the chief executives of the United States government should be standing trial: Osama bin Laden and the "Islamic Group" were armed, trained and financed by Washington in its "holy war" against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan! Now, after Frankenstein's monster, bin Laden and other anti-communist CIA "assets," turned on their creator, the government turns and threatens a leftist lawyer with decades behind bars.

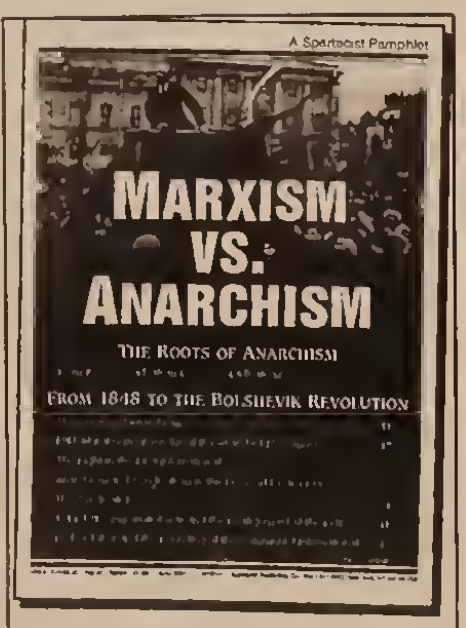
The core of the government's case was captured by prosecutor Christopher Morvillo, who said, regarding sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, "***the United States government locked the door to his cell and threw away the key,***" but the defendants "pulled off the jail break" by allowing the sheik to communicate. The government tried to "lock the door and throw away the key" with "special administrative measures" (SAMs) which strip prisoners and the public of basic rights and privileges. SAMs limit a prisoner's access to mail, telephone, media and visitors. In this case, the SAMs barred Stewart from visiting the sheik unless she submitted to the intrusive and outrageous restrictions in signed "letters of affirmation."

SAMs were introduced in 1996 by Democratic president Bill Clinton who also signed into law the "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act," which led to a diminution of democratic rights and an expansion of death penalty provisions. Democrat Clinton's legislation was inherited and enhanced by the Republican Bush gang in the wake of September 11 with the USA-Patriot Act. The government's case against Lynne Stewart, Yousry and Sattar is based on secretly recorded, supposedly constitutionally protected and privileged attorney-client communications, including telephone conversations and prison visits. The case against Sattar is based on *90,000* government interceptions of private e-mail, faxes and telephone conversations over a period of seven years.

If the government's own wiretaps and surveillance revealed that a conspiracy to support "terrorism" was taking place over a protracted period of time, why did they allow it to continue? The government's flimsy answer is that they were bugging the prison meeting room to "gather intelligence for national security purposes." What vital national security intelligence did they gather? None! And according to the government, it's the ***absence*** of evidence that proves guilt! The prosecution told the jury that the recorded evidence they would hear was admittedly "coded and cryptic" because "the defendants knew that they had to be sneaky because they were concerned about monitoring."

The "evidence" against Mohammed Yousry, a government-approved translator, is his notebooks of discussions with the imprisoned sheik. Yousry is a doctoral candidate in Middle Eastern Studies at New York University. His thesis adviser suggested he take advantage of his rare access to the sheik to develop a theme for his doctoral dissertation. An opponent of Islamic fundamentalism who has never set foot in a mosque in his life, Yousry took notes for a thesis on the Mubarak dictatorship and "Muslim totalitarianism" in Egypt. Paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar is a U.S. citizen and a religious supporter of the sheik whose "crime" in the government's eyes is his faith and "evidence" such as his receipt of phone calls from an alleged "international terrorist"—calls which Stewart's team presumed were the dirty work of an FBI agent.

The first targets of the "war on terror" were immigrants, particularly from Muslim countries. Now the government is going after their lawyers, just as it did the attorneys who defended communists during the McCarthyite witchhunt. But the ultimate targets are the labor movement and all perceived political opponents of the government. As we wrote in an earlier article ("Hands Off Lynne Stewart!" *WV* No. 779, 19 April 2002): "What the government is able to get away with will be determined by the level of social struggle." The labor movement, fighters for black rights and all opponents of capitalist injustice have a direct interest in joining in defense of Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar, and in calling for freedom for all those detained in the "war on terror's" anti-immigrant witchhunt. ***Drop the charges now!*** ■



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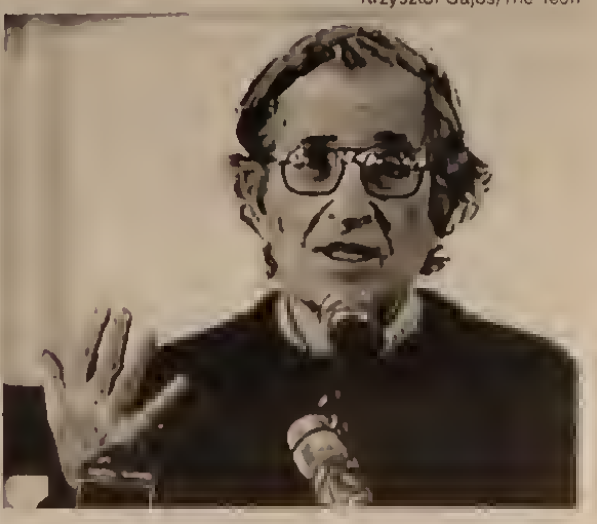


Noam Chomsky: The Liberal's "Anarchist"

Former Fan Shows Up the Esteemed Professor

Many left-wing youth activists look to MIT professor Noam Chomsky for inspiration, and he is a featured speaker at the Boston Social Forum preceding the protests against the Democratic National Convention later this month. His "anarchism" and voluminous critiques of U.S. foreign policy notwithstanding, Chomsky is at bottom an anti-communist liberal. This radical impostor despises us Spartacists because we explode his pretensions as a "critic" of "the system," exposing him as a wannabe adviser to an "enlightened" imperialism.

Illustrative is what he has said over the years about the U.S. and Iraq. Chomsky of late has saluted the end of the "regime" of UN sanctions against Iraq, which had claimed the lives of over one and a half million Iraqis. But Chomsky himself urged the imperialists in 1991 to use "the peaceful means prescribed by international law: sanctions and diplomacy" to force Iraq out of Kuwait (*Z Magazine*, February 1991). For more than eight years, Chomsky plugged Ahmed Chalabi to the imperialists. In a debate with former CIA director James Woolsey, Chomsky referred to Chalabi as "a leading figure of the opposition" and later argued: "We have a responsibility, I think, to ensure that they [proposals by the "Iraqi Democratic opposition" for overthrowing Saddam Hussein] receive serious and honest attention" (PBS *NewsHour*, 12 March 1998). The very same Chalabi was an advance man for the Pentagon in last year's imperialist attack and was one of its leading candidates to govern Iraq before falling from favor earlier this year. In the months before the war, the esteemed professor called for redeploying UN weapons inspectors—themselves spies for the imperialists—and helped "manufacture consent" by echoing imperialist war propaganda. He said: "WMD programs make the world a more dangerous place, Saddam's in particular" ("Interview with Noam Chomsky About US Warplans," ZNet, 29 August 2002).

By invoking treaties and institutions like the UN, an imperialist den of thieves and their victims, Chomsky's purpose is to peddle the myth that through pressure from rad-libs like himself, the imperialists can undertake "humanitarian efforts." But capitalism cannot be reformed, as competition over profits is central to the system. In his *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin described how the free competition of thousands of entrepreneurs in the early days of capitalism gave rise to and was superseded by the rapid concentration of production in ever-larger enterprises, in monopolies. As Lenin explained, in the imperialist epoch, while there are fewer competitors, the struggle between them is greater and more violent, not less. This competition fuels interimperialist rivalries and breeds war, and is precisely what Chomsky obscures when he talks fondly of the rule of "international law."

Where Chomsky appeals to the imperialists, we revolutionary Marxists are for sweeping away their whole system of exploitation through workers revolution. Last year, Spartacist sympathizer T.M. powerfully skewered "America's leading dissident intellectual" for his "loyal opposition" to the U.S. imperialists in an e-mail exchange.

At the beginning of his "Comment on Chomsky's Reply," T.M. refers the reader to his essay "Chomsky on Communism, Socialism: Fake and Real," which among other topics addresses Chomsky on dialectical materialism and his distortions of Lenin. For an answer to the accusation that Lenin and Trotsky were responsible for the crimes of Stalin, as Chomsky maintains, see "Exchange with NEFAC Open City Anarchists—Trotskyism vs. Anarchism on the State and Revolution" (*WV* No. 811, 10 October 2003); for a historical analysis of the anarchist worldview, see the Spartacist pamphlet *Marxism vs. Anarchism* (June 2001).

We reprint below this exchange, originally posted on the Web as "Chomsky Replies to Questions" (6 May 2003)

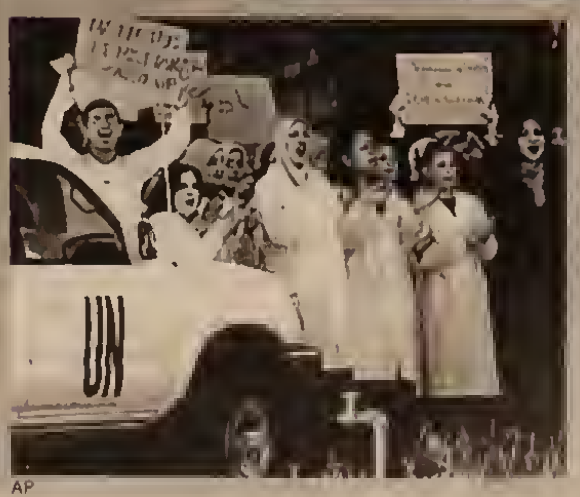
Chomsky's Advice to Imperialists on Iraq

Karen Robinson

Sanctions, not war, Chomsky counsels in 1991. Years of U.S./UN starvation sanctions deprive children of medicine, kill over 1.5 million Iraqis.

AFP

From Chomsky's men to "Pentagon's favorite." Ahmed Chalabi (right), with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld in September 2003, played key role in helping U.S. make their case for war.



AP

"Return inspectors to Iraq," Chomsky says, August 2002. Students at Baghdad campus protest in February 2003 against UN weapons inspectors, spies for the imperialists.

Chomsky Replies to Questions

by T.M.

Chomsky has replied to a few questions I put to him on the ZNet Sustainer's Forum.

The Question

I asked, on 4-30-03:

Professor Chomsky,

I am a long-time admirer of your work, but have recently been won to communism. I have had occasion to go over some of your own writings on communism, and wrote an essay on your views, which you can find here: <http://www.geocities.com/newoctobers/Chomsky_communism.htm>.

You may or may not want to read the entire essay, but I had a few particular questions:

He replied to the questions Sunday, May 04, 2003 08:50 AM as follows: (My questions are preceded with a ">" [and are italicized].)

Chomsky's Reply

Sorry, but with 100s of e-mails every day, I just cannot read essays. Can only put them aside and hope to get to them later

>(1) In your essay "The Soviet Union Versus Socialism" [SUVS] you stated, "Lenin's dictum that 'socialism is nothing but state capitalist monopoly made to benefit the whole people,'.. " You don't give a reference for this "dictum," even though it appears in quotes. Where does this "dictum" come from?

When I wrote the article 15 years ago, I had the reference at hand. Now I'd have to search for it, which wouldn't be too much trouble—it's a famous stand—but I just don't have time for it now. The article probably did have footnotes in the original, which may or may not be what you have seen.

>(2) You have stated that if the left is understood to include Bolshevism then you would "flatly dissociate" yourself from the left. If the left is understood to include the Democratic Party, will you similarly dissociate yourself from the left?

Of course, though the Democratic Party is far less objectionable than Bolshevism, in my judgment

>(3) Are you being honest when you say that you are unable to understand what is meant by "dialectical materialism"?

Yes.

>(4) Do you make any distinction between Leninism and Stalinism?

Of course. I assume it's made in that article. If not, elsewhere. But the basic steps to destroy the socialist elements that developed before the Bolshevik takeover were taken by Lenin and Trotsky, almost immediately, and for principled reasons (from their point of view),

as was the repressive apparatus that was turned into a much worse monstrosity by Stalin.

>(5) Who constituted the "mainstream of the Marxist movement" that considered Lenin to be "counter-revolutionary"?

Pannekoek, Korsch, etc., and with some ambiguity Luxemburg. You can find a list of some of the main figures in Lenin's "ultra-leftist" monograph.

>(6) You continually use the term "we" to describe U.S. imperialism. Do you agree or disagree with the proposition that capitalist societies are cleaved into antagonistic classes?

That's trivially obvious, isn't it? The term "we" is used informally, to indicate that you and I, for example, share responsibility for these atrocities.

>(7) What is your opinion of the term "U.S. imperialism"?

I rarely use the term, except in quotes from others. Like most terms of political discourse, it's been debased by the way it's been used over the years, and wasn't that clear to begin with. There's a huge current literature, in the mainstream as well, over whether US global domination should be called "imperialism." I don't personally take part in it.

>(8) What do you see as the primary cause of the defeat of the Spanish Revolution?

There was no "primary cause." There were many causes. One major cause was the tacit agreement among Stalin, the Western democracies, and the fascists (Spanish and abroad) that the Spanish Revolution had to be defeated. The Communists happened to be in the lead in the endeavor, for a variety of reasons. There were also plenty of steps by the (wide range) of often conflicting elements that were part of the Spanish revolution, in a broad sense, that were dubious or worse.

Comment on Chomsky's Reply

Chomsky continues to march in the anti-communist parade....

The issues of Chomsky's dishonest use of the term "state-capitalism," and the cowardly way he evades dialectical materialism through demagoguery are dealt with in the essay. In the following I will address Chomsky's use of the word "we," the Democratic Party, the Spanish Revolution, and the "mainstream of the Marxist movement" that considered Lenin to be counter-revolutionary.

"Our" State

When asked about the use of the term "we" to refer to the acts of the U.S., Chomsky replies,

> "That's [the fact that capitalist societies are cleaved into antagonistic classes] trivially obvious, isn't it? The term 'we' is used informally, to indicate that you and I, for example, share responsibility for these atrocities."

First of all, this is contradictory. The oppressed do not share responsibility for the crimes of their oppressors. Chomsky grants that capitalist societies are cleaved into antagonistic classes, yet insists that "we" share responsibilities for the atrocities of the state. You can't have it both ways.

Chomsky's insistence on placing the blame for the atrocities of the state on *every citizen of the country* implies that we all have a say in the policies that are carried out. Thus, black factory workers, migrant farm workers, and the board of directors of Exxon all have a say in the policies that are carried out by the state.

It is important to notice that Chomsky lays particular stress on the idea that we are all *responsible* for the atrocities. It is not just a matter of a duty to *oppose* what the capitalists are doing, "we" are responsible for what they do!

I oppose these bastards and their rotten system with every ounce of my being, yet Chomsky will continue to insist that we are all responsible.

Chomsky simply identifies himself with the capitalists. He views the U.S. as a democracy, where "the people" can determine policy. It is true enough, then, that he is responsible. But, for those who are not privileged academics or rich capitalists, blame cannot be accepted.

The state is not neutral. The state is merely an organization of violence for the maintenance of a social order benefiting a particular class. The police, military, courts, etc., are not neutral—their purpose is to protect the rich. As James Madison put it, the primary function of government is to "protect the opulent of the minority against the majority." The state is not "our" state, it is THEIR state, the state of the capitalists.

Secondly, Chomsky undercuts the only available means for fighting the capitalists, namely class struggle. His insistence that "we" are responsible is merely a cry to tie oneself to one's "own" bourgeoisie. Sure, you can be a dissident and complain about how bad "we" are, but by no means are you to struggle *independently* against the ruling class!

F[---] that.

The Evil Bolsheviks and the "Far Less Objectionable" Democratic Party

This one is priceless:

> "...the Democratic Party is far less objectionable than Bolshevism, in my judgment."

What can you say to that? The U.S. is unique in the industrialized world, as far as I know, in that it doesn't have a mainstream political party that can even pretend to have some roots in the labor movement. Even the anti-worker British Labour Party evolved out of the workers movement. The Democratic Party in the U.S., the "left" party, can lay no pretense whatsoever to being a workers party. It evolved directly from the party of the Confederate slavocracy. As Malcolm X put it, "A Democrat ain't nothin' but a Dixiecrat."

The Democratic Party and the Republican Party are simply factions of the party of the bourgeoisie. They could join into the Capitalist Party with no change of platforms. They represent the capitalist class; the only difference between them being *which* interests among the bourgeoisie they represent. There is, in principle, little difference between the Republicans and Democrats. The same general anti-worker, racist policies are carried out by Democrats and Republicans alike. Wilson plunged the U.S. into the first imperialist slaughter, Roosevelt the second; Truman incinerated 140,000 Japanese civilians for the purpose of demonstrating The Bomb to the commies; Kennedy and Johnson initiated the mass slaughter of Vietnamese; Carter funneled arms to the genocidal Indonesian military to slaughter Timorese; Clinton murdered over a million Iraqi civilians. The list could go on...and on.

A couple of particular slaughters should be noted. The U.S. attack on Vietnam was initiated by Democrats. On the other side, the Stalinists sent arms to the communists fighting the U.S. killing machine. (They would have sent more, but the venal Chinese Stalinists prevented them.) As the Democratic Party is "far less objectionable" than the Bolsheviks, then they must be even further less objectionable than the Stalinists. Thus, the support for the Vietnamese communists must be...what? Another bloodbath initiated by a Democrat was the "Afghan trap" laid by Carter's Secretary of State, which drew in the Red Army to fight CIA-fundamentalist cutthroats. Which side of that battle was Chomsky on, I wonder?

So, if the Democratic Party is "far less objectionable" than the Bolsheviks, and the Republican Party is pretty much the same as the Democratic Party, one can only conclude that the Republicans must be at least "less objectionable" than the Bolsheviks. In other words, the capitalists are less objectionable than the communists. This is Chomsky's true class loyalty.

Novosti

M. Alpert

Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution brought proletariat to power, backward regions of former tsarist empire out of the Dark Ages. Right: Literacy campaign for woman in Soviet Caucasus in 1920s. Central planning made possible massive industrial development like building of Turkestan-Siberia railroad line (below).

Ronald Haeberle

Among many crimes of Chomsky's "far less objectionable" Democrats is escalation of U.S. offensive against heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants, including 1968 massacre of some 500 villagers in My Lai.

Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, or a Bad Idea in Somebody's Head

When asked about his opinion of the term "U.S. imperialism," he says,

> "I rarely use the term, except in quotes from others. Like most terms of political discourse, it's been debased by the way it's been used over the years, and wasn't that clear to begin with. There's a huge current literature, in the mainstream as well, over whether US global domination should be called 'imperialism.' I don't personally take part in it."

I should think that Lenin was *exceptionally clear* about the meaning of imperialism, as described in his book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Lenin explained that imperialism is that stage of capitalism marked by *monopoly capitalism*, where monopoly had superseded competition in capitalist economies. In this stage, the drive for capital accumulation forces the capitalists to expand their field of exploitation to the whole world through a massive influx of capital investment, through which the entire world is brought under the domination of the large capitalist states. Lenin gives precise figures for the growth of investment capital, and the concomitant growth in colonialization, etc. There is nothing at all unclear about it.

Should U.S. global domination be called imperialism? What else would you call it? Chopped chicken?

continued on page 9

Spartacist/Spartacus Youth Events

BOSTON — SYC CLASS SERIES

Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

July 20: **Democrats: The Other Party of Racism and War**
For a Workers Party that Fights for Socialist Revolution!

August 10: **The Bolshevik Revolution: How the Working Class Took Power**

Loker Common, Harvard University (Basement of Memorial Hall)
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453 or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

CHICAGO — VIDEO SHOWING

Wednesday, July 14, 6:30 p.m.

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

222 S. Morgan St. (Between Adams and Jackson, Ring #23 on the buzzer)
For more information: (312) 563-0441 or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

Imperialist Butchers Try Their Former Henchman

On July 1, former Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein was brought before a court in Iraq, and his image was broadcast all over the world. As Robert Fisk put it, "Now is the time for bread and circuses" (London *Independent*, 1 July). Forget all the lies about "weapons of mass destruction" and supposed links between Iraq and Al Qaeda; forget about the sadistic torture and killing of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib; forget about the tens of thousands of Iraqis slaughtered and maimed by the American war and occupation—the U.S. has got Saddam and they plan to parade their trophy around. Perhaps Hussein himself captured it best when he said during his hearing, "Bush is a villain, all of this is theatre. It is for his re-election."

But all this could backfire on the Americans, too, inflaming an already combustible situation. Doubtless there are many in Iraq who have suffered from Hussein's brutality and butchery and would like to see him get his, as well as the eleven other former regime officials facing trial. But there is also a strong sense of utter humiliation that an Arab leader who dared to snub his former American patrons is now being displayed as a prisoner of the occupying power. An Iraqi pharmacist told the *New York Times* (2 July), "He may have put me in jail for seven years, but still it's not right for the enemy to sit as his judge." A young taxi driver in Damascus said, "I was about to cry as I was watching Saddam being brought to justice in this disgraceful way. I want his own honest people to try him, not those supported by the Americans. What we saw is a humiliation for all the Arabs."

Reuters photos

Above: Saddam Hussein as president of Iraq, 1997. Right: Hussein being taken to court, 2004. (Guard's face was altered prior to release of photo by U.S. military clearance.)

Saddam Hussein *is* a criminal and butcher with plenty of blood on his hands. But as we wrote when he was captured: "When workers tribunals of a victorious socialist revolution in the United States try America's capitalist exploiters for their crimes against the oppressed masses of the world, black America, labor, immigrants and the poor, and when Iraqi Kurds, leftists and workers rip the oil wealth out of the hands of the military occupiers and judge them and their former henchmen, *then* we can start talking about justice" (*WV* No. 816, 26 December 2003).

Most of the charges brought against Hussein, like the gassing of Kurds, refer to crimes carried out with the forbearance of the American imperialists, who lent their support, monies and arms to the Ba'athist dictatorial regimes that had ruled Iraq since the 1960s. Among the charges *not* brought against Hussein is the massacre and imprisonment of thousands of Iraqi Communists and trade unionists in the early 1960s, many of whom were tortured and killed by Hussein himself—it was the CIA that gave the Ba'athist torturers the names of those to go after. *Saddam Hussein was U.S. imperialism's man in Iraq*, their very own Third World tinpot dictator who fell out of favor with his 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Notwithstanding the transparent facade of an "Iraqi" court trying Hussein, it is cruel and grotesque hypocrisy that the supposed bearers of "justice" in Iraq are the U.S. imperialists, the same forces that are not only imposing this occupation, but that launched the 1991 Gulf War which killed over 100,000 Iraqis and imposed the UN starvation sanctions which killed over 1.5 million more. The crimes of Saddam Hussein pale in comparison with the far greater crimes of U.S. imperialism against working people and the oppressed around the world, from the over six million Asian lives cut down in the wars in Korea and Vietnam to the countless others who have been on the receiving end of U.S. imperialism's wars and machinations from Latin America to the Near East and elsewhere. Whether under Democratic or Republican administration, U.S. imperialism is the deadliest enemy of working people and the oppressed around the world, including right here in the U.S.

Much has been made in the media over the supposed "handover of power," done in secrecy with former administrator Bremer fleeing the country like he was fleeing the plague. But it's all a sham. The leader of the new Iraqi "government," Allawi, is a straight-out CIA asset, the former head of European operations for the Ba'ath Party and its intelligence agency in London, described by CIA veterans as a "thug" with Iraqi "blood on his hands." The occupation continues with all its barbarity and brutality unabated. The thousands of Iraqi prisoners detained by the U.S. continue to be held by the U.S. Drinking water and electricity are still scarce and life is hell for most people in the country.

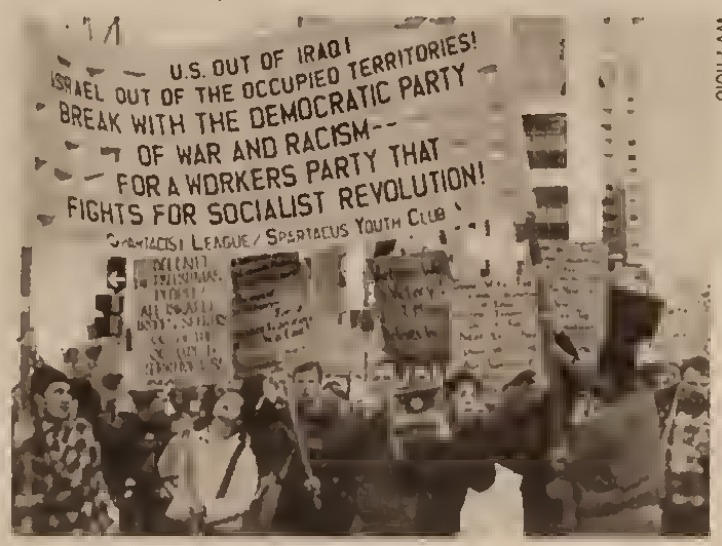
It takes some chutzpah for the U.S. to charge Hussein for his invasion of Kuwait—this from the same people who ravaged Iraq. The "liberation" promised to the Iraqi masses—the modern version of the "white man's burden"—is borne on an ocean of blood. It seeks its legitimacy on a mountain of lies, and then more lies when the masses at home realize that they are paying with their lives and well-being for the appetites and perfidy of their rulers. We fight for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied forces from Iraq. This is part of the fight for the socialist revolution necessary to free the peoples of Iraq from their subjugation. It is in the interests of working people around the world that we struggle to forge the workers party necessary to lead the multiracial American working class in socialist revolution to sweep the bloody American imperialist system off the face of the earth forever. *Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out now!*■

Workers Party...

(continued from page 1)

into the dead end of the Democratic Party. They built platforms *for* Democratic Party politicians and pandered to the "peace is patriotic" crowd. And when the war began and the real horror and terror began to rain on the people of Iraq, the Democrats rallied 'round the flag and their commander in chief.

Now what's ANSWER's answer? Their "Call to Action" for the DNC/RNC rallies says, "The real hope for change...will come about from an enlarged and politically conscious mass movement of the people." There is no such thing as an undifferentiated "people" in the U.S. Rather, this society is split into two main classes with counterposed interests—the capitalists and the workers they exploit—and founded on the bedrock of chattel slavery and the continuing vicious racial oppression of black people. The interests of labor and capital can never coexist in a common "people's" program; one class or the other must dominate. ANSWER's evasion of the class line is not an omission; it is deliberately done to prevent seething discontents from exceeding the bounds of pressure politics on the Democrats and taking the form of independent working-class political action.



WV Photo

Chicago, March 20: SL/SYC contingent raises call to break with Democratic Party at rally protesting Iraq occupation.

Ralph Nader: Unsavory at Any Speed

Why do we say Ralph Nader, who ran on the Green Party ticket in 1996 and 2000, and is running independently this time, is a bourgeois politician, and that therefore we shouldn't support him? "Bourgeois" is not a snotty insult meaning someone's boring lifestyle; it is a term Marxists use for the class of property-owning capitalists who buy labor power from the working class. American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon explained the class character of parties in 1948:

> "It is not determined by the class which supports the party at the moment, but rather by the class which the party supports; that is to say, by its program. That is the basic meaning of a political program, the support of one class rule or another. The class character of a party is also determined by its actual practice.... Another factor to be considered is the composition of a party. A bourgeois party of the classical type is easily recognized because it has all three of these qualities—it is bourgeois in program, in practice, and in composition."

The American working class does not have its own political party, not even a reformist one like the Labour Party in Britain or the social-democratic parties in Europe. Instead, the U.S. tends to produce "third party" populist formations, which can appear somewhat left or right, and are sometimes virulently racist. This reflects the enormous weight of the American petty bourgeoisie, that intermediate class between the workers and the bosses, composed of small "independent" businessmen, students, professionals, intellectuals, managers, doctors, lawyers, bureaucrats of all sorts. Lawyer/publisher Ralph Nader, who is against trade unions in his *own* businesses, is a perfect example of this type, as is his running mate, Green Party member Peter Camejo, stockbroker/founder of Progressive Asset Management, promoting "socially responsible investments."

Neither the Green Party nor Nader call for ending capitalism, only for giving breaks to the "little capitalists." Many of the proposals of the Greens and Nader go against the interests not only of the industrial working class, but against human progress. In Germany, the Social Democratic/Green government attacked the living standards of the workers to increase Germany's competitiveness, while Green foreign minister Joschka Fischer deployed German jets, tanks and troops, for the first time since the Third Reich, to participate in the wars against Serbia and Afghanistan. And what about the Green Party's "key value," that people must "live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities" and "move to an energy efficient economy"? What does this mean for the already desperately poor in inner-city ghettos? For the fight against the horrible worldwide AIDS pandemic, which requires sophisticated medicines, refrigeration—i.e., electrification and a modern industrial infrastructure?

We need an international *expansion* of advanced technology, science and production to solve these world problems, not a retreat to some utopian sentimental pre-industrial Hobbiton of happy farmers, honest tradesmen and small craftsmen, which is impossible in any case. Technology and large-scale industry, which is extremely efficient and saves huge amounts of human labor, can be used to solve human problems. But first these instruments have to be ripped out of the hands of the capitalists by the working class, which actually knows how to run things. Abolishing private ownership of factories means abolishing the stock market, putting brokers for "ecologically correct" capitalism like Camejo out of business.

There is a more sinister side to the Nader campaign. While Camejo plays up his immigrant roots, Nader calls the shots for this bum ticket and his message on immigrants is toxic racism. In an interview with the sinister rightist Pat Buchanan in the *American Conservative* (21 June), Nader (himself the son of Lebanese immigrants) attacks immigrants, saying, "I don't like the idea of legalization because then the question is how do you prevent the next wave and the next?" While Nader is explicit that the whole purpose of his campaign is to push the Democratic Party in a more "progressive" direction, he is running on the Reform Party ballot and openly appeals to conservative Republican voters. His foam-

Chomsky...

(continued from page 7)

The thing is that for Chomsky the nefarious actions of the U.S. around the world are just bad policies carried out by evil men, as a result of some bad ideas that got into somebody's head somehow. They are not the result of economic pressures in the material world. If only we can preach to them loud enough to obey international law, this nasty thing called "imperialism" can be ended.

And pigs will fly.

The Communist Devils and the Anarchist Saints

When asked what the primary cause of the defeat of the Spanish Revolution was, he replies,

> "There was no 'primary cause.' There were many causes. One major cause was the tacit agreement among Stalin, the Western democracies, and the fascists (Spanish and abroad) that the Spanish Revolution had to be defeated. The Communists happened to be in the lead in the endeavor, for a variety of reasons. There were also plenty of steps by the (wide range) of often conflicting elements that were part of the Spanish revolution, in a broad sense, that were dubious or worse."

Predictably, no mention is made of the anarchists in the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT). The Stalinists and the Western democracies (no quotes around "democracies") certainly have plenty of blame for the defeat. However, crucial to the defeat of the revolution was the betrayal of the CNT.

The CNT was the largest and most influential anarchist party ever. It is the only anarchist party to lead a revolution with a chance of success. When a real revolutionary turning-point came, though, they played right into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which led directly to fascism. In 1936 Spain entered a pre-revolutionary stage of ***dual power*** between the armed workers and the "Republican Left" in the government. At the crucial moment, the CNT leaders entered the government in a popular front, and tried to ***subordinate*** the workers movement to the "left" government. The crucial battle was described by Orwell in *Homage to Catalonia*. On May 3, 1937 the government and the workers in the CNT fought over the telephone exchange in Barcelona. As the Stalinists moved in, the CNT exhorted the workers to ***lay down their arms***. The workers were not willing to comply, but lacking organized leadership and in the face of the demoralization at the sell-out, the workers' resolve dissipated and the government regained control of the city. The Stalinists and the bureaucrats, with the collaboration of the CNT tops, then executed a purge which broke the back of the anti-fascist struggle. As Leon Trotsky explained,

> "In opposing the *goal*, the conquest of power, the Anarchists could not in the end fail to oppose the *means*, the revolution. The leaders of the CNT and FAI not only helped the bourgeoisie hold on to the shadow of power in July 1936; they also helped it to reestablish bit by bit what it had lost at one stroke. In May 1937, they sabotaged the uprising of the workers and thereby saved the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Thus anarchism, which wished merely to be antipolitical, proved in reality to be antirevolutionary, and in the more critical moments—counterrevolutionary."
>
> —"The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning" (December 1937)

Chomsky also, as usual, paints "the Communists" as being in the lead of crushing the revolution. Which communists? Perhaps he needs reminding of the fact that his hero Orwell fought with the POUM in Spain, against the fascists. The POUM, the "Party of Marxist Unification" was also communist...Orwell was himself the victim of a Stalinist witch-hunt, as he describes in *Homage to Catalonia*. Yet, at the crucial moment the Stalinists, the Anarchist mis-leaders and the bourgeoisie acted in concert to stave off the dreaded specter of workers' revolution.

It is hard to avoid surmising that Chomsky would himself act similarly to the anarchist mis-leaders. Being against the workers' dictatorship, he cannot help but oppose the means. Chomsky has nothing but praise for the Spanish anarchists, who were never soiled by actually having to hold onto power.

Lenin the Counter-Revolutionary

When asked who were the "mainstream of the Marxist movement" that considered Lenin to be counter-revolutionary, he replies,

> "Pannekoek, Korsch, etc., and with some ambiguity Luxemburg. You can find a list of some of the main figures in Lenin's 'ultra-leftist' monograph."

Does "Lenin's 'ultra-leftist' monograph" refer to *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*? This is an excellent work, but it does not, as far as I am aware, contain a list of people who considered Lenin to be counter-revolutionary.

Were there sharp differences in the Marxist movement? Of course. Were there lots of Marxists who criticized Lenin and the Bolsheviks? Of course. Was there a mainstream of the Marxist movement that considered Lenin to be counter-revolutionary? Of course not.

After October 1917 the Bolsheviks *were* the [------] mainstream of the Marxist movement! The October Revolution energized and inspired the workers movement around the world. The best of the movement were virtually all won to revolutionary Marxism, i.e. Bolshevism. True, a number of opportunists like Karl Kautsky, criticized the Bolsheviks, and then led their own parties to disaster, but the Bolsheviks had enormous prestige around the world.

We shall have to consider Chomsky's claim that Lenin was considered to be counter-revolutionary by the mainstream of the Marxist movement as absurd.

The idea that Luxemburg, in particular, considered Lenin *in any way* (ambiguity or no) to be counter-revolutionary is, frankly, asinine. True, she was harshly critical of certain aspects of Bolshevik policies and actions, but she left no doubt as to her immense admiration for the work of Lenin and Trotsky. She wrote, for example, in her book *The Russian Revolution*,

> "The Bolsheviks have shown that they are capable of everything that a genuine revolutionary party can contribute within the limits of the historical possibilities. They are not supposed to perform miracles. For a model and faultless proletarian revolution in an isolated land, exhausted by world war, strangled by imperialism, betrayed by the international proletariat, would be a miracle.
>
> "What is in order is to distinguish the essential from the non-essential, the kernel from the accidental excrescences in the policies of the Bolsheviks. In the present period, when we face decisive final struggles in all the world, the most important problem of socialism was and is the burning question of our time. It is not a matter of this or that secondary question of tactics, but of the capacity for action of the proletariat, the strength to act, the will to power of socialism as such. In this, Lenin and Trotsky and their friends were the *first*, those who went ahead as an example to the proletariat of the world; they are still the *only ones* up to now who can cry with Hutten: 'I have dared!'
>
> "This is the essential and *enduring* in Bolshevik policy. In *this* sense theirs is the immortal historical service of having marched at the head of the international proletariat with the conquest of political power and the practical placing of the problem of the realization of socialism, and of having advanced mightily the settlement of the score between capital and labor in the entire world. In Russia the problem could only be posed. It could not be solved in Russia. And in *this* sense, the future everywhere belongs to 'Bolshevism'."■

flecked anti-Communism is expressed in his article "The China Price" (21 June, published by CommonDreams.org), wherein he attacks U.S. corporations for going to Chinese "production facilities inside a communist dictatorship."

Yet what bothers liberals and even self-proclaimed socialists is ***not*** Nader's anti-immigrant bigotry, his anti-worker positions or his anti-Communism, but their fear that a vote for Nader might siphon votes from the Democrats! Thus Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn call to vote for Nader only in "safe" states (i.e., it's OK in Massachusetts where they live, but not in Florida). The Green Party split over the question, deciding *not* to endorse Nader but run their own candidate only in "safe" states. Socialist Alternative shamelessly touts Ralph Nader as a real "alternative." The International Socialist Organization, which supported Nader in 2000, is torn. Their *Socialist Worker* (25 June) is over the moon about Nader's selection of Camejo, approvingly quoting the *Los Angeles Times* that "Nader's selection of Camejo gave further shape to a left-leaning, antiwar campaign," while their next issue deplores "The Green Party's step backward" in rejecting Nader.

Fight for a Revolutionary Workers Party

A workers party in this country will not be a tame electoral party that just makes speeches and gets "protest votes." A fighting workers party will be based on the struggle for black liberation and socialist revolution. No decisive gains for blacks or labor were ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress—or by a presidential election. It took the Civil War to open the road to black freedom in this country. And the only reason black people reconquered the right to vote and broke formal Jim Crow segregation in the South in the 1950s and 1960s was because of militant struggle that went outside the channels of the capitalist parties, including armed self-defense against Klan terror. The limited legal and social reforms made by Lyndon Johnson's "war on poverty" were a response to ghetto upheavals in every major city from New York to Los Angeles. The end of the draft and the legalization of abortion nationwide were a reaction to the social turmoil then convulsing the country in opposition to the Vietnam War.

Liberals always hail Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal 1930s coalition as a model of how Democrats can be "friends of labor." But in fact the New Deal only tied down labor and minorities to capitalist politics—a wretched tradition cravenly continued today by the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy, which has resulted in the significant weakening of the labor movement. The New Deal sold out the fight for black rights by cementing an alliance with Southern racist Dixiecrats, and the South is still largely non-union today as a result. The gains workers made back then resulted from hard-fought general strikes and plant occupations typically led by reds. The capitalist class continually seeks to illegalize such militant, successful tactics, and must be continually challenged if the working class is ever to change this reactionary political system. Those are the kinds of battles a fighting workers party must take on, because that's how things are going to change.■

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Port Truckers...

(continued from page 3)

because the shipping bosses feared that West Coast port truckers angry about the suit might join in the East Coast strike.

Two weeks before the strike, a June 14 meeting took place at Teamsters headquarters with port truckers and leaders from 18 North American ports to discuss working conditions and low pay. Later that week, Teamsters head James P. Hoffa released a list of "recommendations" to the steamship lines, while simultaneously declaring that his union was not sponsoring the shutdown. One proposal advocated by the Teamsters is that regional trucking companies hire port truckers as direct employees, which would allow the drivers to be unionized. But for this gain to be real, the existing workforce—i.e., the current owner-operators—should be the first ones hired by unionized trucking companies.

The Teamsters along with others are also lobbying for a federal law to make the terminal and shipping companies responsible for maintaining chassis to national safety standards. As part of their struggle for unionization, port truckers must fight for union safety committees with the power to shut down unsafe conditions, to protect not only the drivers but the public on the highways.

It will take hard class struggle against the bosses and the capitalist state to organize the independent port truckers. Such a fight must necessarily go beyond the bounds of narrow trade unionism. From Oakland to Port Newark, port truckers constitute a largely immigrant and minority workforce; for example, they're predominantly Latino in L.A. and majority black in Charleston. To organize such workers, the union must be in the forefront of the ***fight for full citizenship rights for immigrants, for black equality and against all forms of discrimination***.

The fact that the strike was strong in the Southern ports of Miami and Charleston underlines the crucial importance of organizing the "open shop" South. A determined drive for unionization there will not have a strictly economic character, nor will it likely emanate from the top echelons of the AFL-CIO. It will have to confront not only the police, company goons and scabs, but also race-terrorists like the Ku Klux Klan.

A sharp political struggle is necessary to oust the labor lieutenants of capital, the trade-union misleaders who tie the unions to the Democrats—or, in the case of the Teamsters bureaucracy, at times the Republicans. It is necessary to forge a class-struggle leadership within the unions as part of the fight to build a revolutionary workers party.■

Fahrenheit...

(continued from page 12)

is organized to extract profit for the minuscule class of capitalists, who own the factories, banks, transportation, etc., from the labor of those who produce the wealth, the working class.

Moore's worldview explains some of the glaring omissions in the film. For example, his populist outlook leads him to ignore the Bush administration's close ties to the Christian right, to take notice of which would mean acknowledging that Bush really has a popular base. The box office figures of *The Passion of the Christ*, remember, are real. The neocons come in for personal ridicule, but not for braintrusting the Iraq invasion policy. They are closely aligned with the religious right, particularly in support of Zionist Israel. To mention this fact would get in the way of his Democratic bandwagon-building, as the Democrats are, if anything, more wedded to support of the Zionists than the Republicans. In fact, Moore himself declared in a *Los Angeles Times* (22 June) interview that "Israel is a democracy."

Where Moore (and lots of other people) see the need to hold your nose and vote Democrat in November, we argue

Reuters

Soldier's mother at NYC press conference called by military families in support of Moore's movie, June 30.

that a vote to the Democrats is a vote in favor of chaining the working masses to their oppressors and that the need is to fight to lay the basis for a conscious *class* break from the Democrats in the direction of political independence for the workers. The hoopla surrounding *Fahrenheit 9/11* and its "anybody but Bush" popularity is a perfect illustration of why the Russian revolutionary Lenin argued in his work *State and Revolution* that "a democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism." As he put it, "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics."

Think about it. Through the last few years a growing number of activists have participated in struggle against the capitalist system's madness. But then bring up the question of elections. All of a sudden, many of those who had become increasingly open to getting rid of the capitalist system as a whole now get all emotional about how much we need to fire the capitalist oppressor Bush, even if it means supporting the capitalist oppressor Kerry. Add in a few left-sounding voices to the chorus (like Moore's) and you end up with a pretty solid array of forces working to convince everyone that there *is* a real alternative within the capitalist framework.

In discussing some of these ideas with audiences following showings of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, we occasionally encountered something like the following argument: "There's not a huge difference between the Democrats and Republicans, but things would have been better if Gore were president." From Moore's film you'd think that no American capitalist did anything about Iraq until George W. Bush met September 11. Not nearly true. While a Gore administration might not have invaded Iraq and established a colonial occupation—an optional aggression from the standpoint of the ruling class—he likely would have "merely" continued the Democratic Clinton Iraq policy, a regime of sanctions punctuated regularly by bombings that completely ravaged Iraq and ***killed hundreds of thousands more Iraqis than Bush's war***. All this was accomplished under a humanitarian guise (along with his adventures in Somalia, Haiti and Serbia) and with minimal protest.

So why do the capitalists wage all these wars? As much as Moore brilliantly evokes the hypocrisies of the Bush administration's war propaganda, his explanation of the underlying motives is shallow. In line with the latest in anti-globalization ideology he offers as an explanation the incestuous web linking the Saudi royal family to the Bush family, who are in turn in bed with Cheney and a handful of similar rich white corporate profiteers. But it's ridiculous to think that the personal profit interests of a handful alone motivated either the Afghanistan or Iraq wars.

The government represents the executive committee of the ruling capitalist class, which means more than obtaining tax breaks for a bunch of robber barons.

Reuters / Simon/SABA

Democrat Bill Clinton, imperialist war criminal: passenger train destroyed by 1999 U.S./NATO terror bombing of Serbia, carried out in the name of "humanitarian" intervention on behalf of Kosovars.

The White House and Congress must defend the strategic interests that serve the capitalist social system. So while you might see capitalist politicians bickering over tactics ("We need the UN!"—Democrats; "Screw those pansies!"—Bush & Co.), there is mutual commitment that, with the Soviet Union gone, U.S. imperialism must use its overwhelming military might to expand and solidify its grip on world resources and markets in the interest of raw profit for U.S. capitalists at the expense of their European and Japanese rivals. Controlling the world's oil faucet helps in doing this. So does dictating to your imperialist competitors what wars (or trade agreements, spheres of influence, etc.) will take place and what role they'll have in the world arena. International capitalist competition drives the ruling class of each dominant industrialized country to expand and extend its profit-making reach. In other words, imperialism is not a policy that a particular government can take or leave, but nothing other than modern capitalism itself.

If an American ruler launches a war effort proclaiming that, for example, it will "make the world safe for democracy" or "liberate the oppressed Kosovars," then 1) he is lying and 2) these lies, necessary to get working people to fight and die for the profits of their own exploiters, are not simply the product of individual moral depravity (as Moore portrays it with Bush) but are a result of the way capitalists and their representatives see their class interests, which they must pass off as the national interest.

At the end of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Moore says of U.S. troops: "They offer to give up their lives so that we can be free. It is remarkable their gift to us. And all they ask for in return is that we never send them into harm's way unless it's absolutely neeessary." And then, referring to Bush's lies about Iraq, Moore intones of the troops, "Will they ever trust us again?" Hmmm. Have American presidents lied for war before? Well, if history is good for anything, it's to answer questions like this.

• The Spanish-American War: The sinking of the American battleship USS *Maine* in 1898 was blamed on Spain, and "Remember the Maine" became the war cry for America's first imperialist war to defeat Spain and seize its colonies in Cuba and the Philippines. It is now well established that the explosion that sank the ship was caused by faulty construction design.

• World War I: Democrat Wilson justified U.S. intervention vowing that "the world must be made safe for democracy." In fact, the war, which saw unprecedented bloodletting on all sides, served only to redivide the world among the capitalist powers, with up-and-coming U.S. imperialism coming out on top.

• World War II: This supposed "war against fascism" was, except for the Soviet Union, in reality another war to redivide the world, this time touched off by Germany's drive to reverse the results of its defeat in the First World War and Japan's competition with the U.S. over who would dominate the Pacific and East Asia. For over a year prior to Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt sought to provoke a Japanese attack to justify an American declaration of war. He got it.

• Vietnam: The Democratic Johnson administration fabricated stories of an unprovoked attack on an American ship in the Gulf of Tonkin to get Congress to pass an effective declaration of war, enabling a massive escalation of the U.S.'s dirty colonial war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

In fact, most of American imperialism's wars were launched under Democratic administrations (in addition to the above, the Democrat Truman initiated the Korean War under United Nations auspices, and Democrat Clinton directed General Wesley Clark, whom Moore supported during the primaries, to bomb much of the life out of Serbia). So, why have the Democrats led most of America's wars? *Fahrenheit 9/11* eloquently shows why, though Moore didn't mean to do so. In one scene Bush addresses his rich corporate friends, quipping, "This is an impressive crowd, the haves and the have-mores. Some people call you the elite. I call you my base." Who would want to fight and die for *these people*? Moore chronicles perfectly how Bush's Iraq lies were transparent and stupid—not like the Democrats, who provide much nicer-sounding, humanitarian war lies and pose as "friends of labor."

It is this kinder, gentler, friendlier-to-the-people image relative to the other big party of capitalism that makes the Democrats more pernicious, more deceptive, and *more effective* than the Republicans. Look at what Moore recently had to say about Kerry, a man who wants to substantially increase the American troop presence in Iraq: "He is a person of integrity whose heart is in a good place. He will never send kids off to war unless he absolutely has to. Because he's been there himself" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 June). It is precisely for the same reason that the Democrats are able to masquerade as a lesser evil that they are American imperialism's *preferred* party for racism and war.

Perhaps the most glaring omission in the film comes when Moore treats the "war on terror" simply as a mechanism used to instill fear of terrorists in the populace, but ignores its central use—as a racist witchhunt of immigrants, the first target of a wider war on blacks, workers and all the oppressed. Why would Moore leave out this central component of the capitalists' cynical use of September 11? Moore in his own way echoes the Democratic politicians who argue that Bush is not prosecuting the "war on terror" effectively. In an inter-

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Los Angeles...

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and Educational Fund (MALDEF) with racist epithets. This past week the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement rounded up and deported 47 workers, including two pregnant women, at a clothing factory in downtown L.A. We say: Down with the racist roundups! No deportations!

Meanwhile, on June 23, televisions across the country flashed the all-too-familiar images of the brutal beating of a black man in Compton after a car chase by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). *After* surrendering, then getting tackled by cops, and while lying face-down on the ground, Stanley Miller was repeatedly kicked and beaten with a heavy metal flashlight by the cops, who then glad-handed each other. Placed in a state prison medical facility after showing signs of brain damage from the attack, as of June 30 Miller had not yet received an independent medical examination! As his mother said, "First they beat my son like a dog, then they won't give him the proper medical care." The racist rulers are waging a "war on terror" against working people from Iraq to the ghettos and barrios of the U.S., and their targets at home are black people, immigrants and the working class as a whole.

Despite the widespread fear in the immigrant population, thousands have come out this past month in protest against the racist roundups, from Ontario in San Bernadino County to downtown L.A. Members of the Spartacist League rallied with others in Los Angeles on June 26, marching with signs in English and Spanish calling for "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" "Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq!" "Anti-Terror Witchhunt—Deadly Danger to Immigrants, Blacks, Workers" and "For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!" At the L.A. demonstration called by ANSWER, Latino Movement USA and Hermandad Mexicana, SL spokesman Lisa Martin addressed the crowd, pointing out what is necessary:

> "The 'war on terror' is a war against immigrants, labor and blacks. We say break with the national unity lie; we're for the international unity of the working class. The labor movement must be mobilized to demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants! It's a matter of defense of the labor movement."

The multiracial working class organized at the point of production has both the interest and the power to fight in defense of the ghettos and barrios. Latino workers must resist the treacherous appeals of aspiring bourgeois politicos who would pit them against black people. In the U.S. the black question is strategic for proletarian revolution, and immigrant workers must grasp clearly that the fight against black oppression is central to any struggle to defend democratic rights and the interests of the working class. Attacks against immigrants always go hand in hand with attacks against blacks—anti-immigrant Proposition 187 led directly to the racist Proposition 209 against affirmative action.

Immigrant workers are not helpless victims; they're a vital component of the multiracial working class. Armed with militant traditions of struggle in their homelands, immigrant workers have been a key part of labor battles in this country, from the 1912 "Bread and Roses" strike in the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile mills to the 1990s Justice for Janitors organizing drive in L.A. Together with black workers, who are a key component of the U.S. industrial working class, they can play a vital role in a working-class offensive against racial oppression and capitalist exploitation. This underscores the need for the labor movement to fight to organize the unorganized. This past year Southern California saw a five-month strike by the multiracial grocery workers of the UFCW, and on July 1 the heavily immigrant hotel workers, organized in the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE), overwhelmingly voted down the hotel bosses' proposal, which rejects the union's demand for a uniform national contract expiration date and shifts soaring health care costs onto the workers.

A victory by L.A.'s working class would be in the interest of the impoverished residents of the city's ghettos and barrios, and would be a major blow against the historically anti-union "city fathers" and their attack dogs in the LAPD. The main obstacle to unleashing working-class power is the pro-capitalist union misleaders, who are the bosses' lieutenants in the labor movement. Through their allegiance to the Democratic Party, they seek to ensure that the militancy and determination shown in the struggles of the organized proletariat are confined within the boundaries of the bosses' rules.

The daily terror meted out to minorities by the Border Patrol and the LAPD is not some aberration that can be remedied by electing more black and Latino bourgeois politicians. In fact, liberal Democratic L.A. city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa, currently poised to run again for mayor next year, expressed his main concern as "restor[ing] the public's confidence in our law enforcement" during the Rampart police brutality and corruption probe four years ago.

AP KABC-TV

Sign at protest outside L.A. police station, June 25, two days after video captured flashlight-wielding cops beating Stanley Miller (above).

Meanwhile, black ex-police chief, now city councilman, Bernard Parks, who is also running for mayor, is attempting to portray himself as the enlightened defender of the black ghetto—this from the man who presided over the LAPD killing machine for years. In 1999, when daily protests took place over the LAPD's brutal killing of Margaret Mitchell, a 100-pound, mentally ill, black homeless woman, Parks denounced protesters for having an "agenda" and for "stereotyping" the cops as racist! What *all* these capitalist politicians represent, Democrat and Republican, from the mayor on down, are the interests of *their class*—the bosses who own the means of production. The police and Border Patrol are an integral part of the capitalist state—the apparatus of repression against the working class by the capitalist rulers—which at its core consists of the army, the courts, the prisons and the cops.

In the two weeks since the LAPD beating of Miller, many references have been made to the brutal beating of Rodney King by cops, whose acquittal sparked the 1992 L.A. upheaval. With the mayor facing an election next year and the LAPD operating under a federal consent decree as a result of the Rampart scandal, the city's rulers have been nervously working overtime to prevent any mass response of outrage. To that end, Mayor Hahn quickly appointed a "committee of community leaders" in the wake of the LAPD beating of Miller so that "the community [will] be able to be informed at every step in the process." Through this committee, composed largely of black front men for the racist rulers, these representatives from "respectable" black organizations such as the Urban League and the NAACP are assisting in dousing any expressions of outrage by the masses.

Also lending his hand as a fireman is cynical hustler Al Sharpton, fresh from his run in the Democratic Party primaries. Appearing briefly at a South-Central meeting on June 28 called in protest against Miller's beating, Sharpton stayed just long enough to call for a "federal law on police conduct" and "national standards of policing"! Perhaps the reason Reverend Sharpton hightailed it out of South-Central before anyone from the audience could get to the mike is because he realized that people there understand there *is* a national standard of policing, enforced by none other than an avowed admirer of the Confederacy, Attorney General John Ashcroft! Among the speakers from the floor that night was a spokesman from the Spartacist League, who said in part:

> "There *is* no such thing as reforming or rehabilitating the police. Civilian review boards, sensitivity training, hiring more black, minority and female cops—none of this will change a thing because cops are an instrument for repression of all the working class. A little bit of punishment for a few cops is not going to change anything. The courts aren't going to change anything—they're the same capitalist courts that locked up Geronimo Pratt and Mumia Abu-Jamal. It's only the abolition of this racist, capitalist system that will bring an end to police terror. It's the multiracial working class that has the power to shut down this city, to protest cop terror and brutality in a demonstration that would really cut across all the racial divisions in Los Angeles. But it's the Democrats, like Al Sharpton and [Congresswoman] Maxine Waters, who do everything they can to prevent that. We can't have illusions in the Democrats *or* Republicans, that they will *ever* defend any of our interests. What we need is a multiracial revolutionary party of the working class that will fight with class struggle means and overthrow capitalism with a socialist revolution."■

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view in the July issue of *Playboy*, Moore advises that the U.S. should "Hire the Israelis to find Osama and kill him."

Moore ridicules Bush for going after the wrong people—harmless peaceniks and a guy in a gym who was critical of Bush—and demonstrates that Bush doesn't even take his own terrorist warnings seriously by showing the comically sub-skeletal police force assigned to keep Oregon's serene coastline "safe." But in doing so, Moore implicitly gives credence to the capitalists' xenophobic framework of national security. Take his intimations that the Saudis control some 7 percent of the American economy and were therefore able to escape scrutiny following September 11. To begin with, it's a joke to think that American imperialism answers to the Saudi royal family. More importantly, by saying nothing about the witchhunt against Arabs and Muslims in the U.S., Moore plays into the still rampant government-led chauvinism that all Arabs are potential terrorists who need to be watched.

While we're on the topic of state repression, we can't let pass Moore's disgusting statement in his book *Dude, Where's My Country?* that black journalist and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal "did indeed kill that cop." Moore willfully ignored the overwhelming evidence proving the innocence of this fighter against black oppression, put on death row in a transparent frame-up targeting him for his political views. This is the type of repression that the government wants to seriously escalate. On a case that touches America's racist core, this statement is like a pledge of loyalty to the racist capitalist order.

Fahrenheit 9/11 features a number of scenes focusing on the impact of war on black people in America: Lila Lipscomb's story, the Marine recruiters prowling a mall parking lot looking for young black recruits, and the group of young black men who all raise hands when asked who has a friend or relative fighting in Iraq. These sequences powerfully evoke the economic draft, where it is those who are most ground down by the structural poverty and racial oppression of this profit-driven society who end up on the front lines of their oppressor's wars. Moore evokes sympathy for the plight of these working and oppressed youth sent off to do imperialism's dirty work. Many, including Moore, take this to argue that those who oppose the war should "support the troops." But Iraq is a clear case where it is necessary to take a side, and not the side of the U.S. or those doing its fighting—every blow struck against the American occupation forces is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world, including in the U.S.

The capitalists' timeless lie that there is a "national unity" must be smashed. It is essential to drive home the point that a vote for the Democrats is a vote for a democratic facade to the "war on terror" and the occupation of Iraq, which they will continue not because they're spineless, but because the Democrats are devoted to the capitalist system. Moore's proposed solution cannot change this reality, and more to the point, his populism, his identification with the American on the street, his awareness of racism make him especially effective in mobilizing support for the Democratic Party in a way that the Democrats cannot do for themselves. This *counteracts* exactly what is most pressing—a political break with the capitalist framework, and therefore the Democratic Party.

There is a force that can change things—the multiracial working class, the collective producers who have both the power and the need to remake society based on production for need rather than profit, and thereby lay the basis for obliterating class and therefore inequality from history. The fight to unleash that power is the fight for a workers party that is independent of the capitalist parties and based on a policy of class struggle—the mobilization of its power through strikes and other work actions—in defense of itself, blacks, immigrants and all the oppressed toward ultimately smashing the existing state power. While powerful in many ways, *Fahrenheit 9/11* expresses a worldview all too common among workers and leftist youth today—that workers are good people who form a potentially powerful voting bloc as victims of a corporate-dominated system. The key to human liberation is to understand the working class as a class with power, *the* force for change. The working class and oppressed can't elect capitalism out of office. We need a workers revolution.■

NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated August 6.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Fahrenheit 9/11

A Marxist Review

by Aman Singh

Michael Moore's powerful new documentary, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, offers a rare commodity in this era of stage-directed "reality"—a dose of truth, conveyed in human terms. Its images of mangled Iraqi limbs and mutilated babies are rare glimpses of what happens on the receiving end of America's bombs. Where much of America sees either a faceless "enemy" or faceless beneficiaries of American "liberation," Moore gives voice to human victims, as in the Baghdad woman in agonized rage over the American military's murder of her family, or the family terrorized by U.S. troops on Christmas Eve. A black man in Flint, Michigan, sees images of war-torn Baghdad and remarks, "There's parts of Flint that look like that, and we ain't even been in a war." Wrenching stories like that of Lila Lipscomb, whose son's death in Iraq convinced her of the depravity of the Iraq war, go untold by the mass media.

The film's resonance across the country has been intense. It set the record for the highest-grossing opening weekend in documentary film history. It has caught the attention of Bush's right-wing keepers, and for good reason. Moore's raw talent as a propagandist perhaps best comes through in his portrait of the dim and banally monstrous George W. Bush, who plays golf and vacations while thousands of Iraqi people and hundreds of American troops die at his command. Fearing this, the Republican-beholden Disney corporation refused to distribute the film, which was subsequently given an R rating to deter most teenagers from seeing it. (Moore points out that this prevents those who could soon be drafted from seeing exactly what they might be doing in the armed forces.) A small group of prominent Republicans calling themselves Move America Forward has campaigned to intimidate theaters from showing the film; a parallel group called Citizens United filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission to ban advertising for it.

But there's a problem. From the point of view of *changing* the reality that Moore powerfully depicts, *Fahrenheit 9/11* is fundamentally defective. It is a sad comment on the state of American leftist political consciousness to witness the spectacle of audiences rightfully agitated by Bush's deadly war, inflamed by the sinister Patriot Act, disgusted by the Democrats' pathetic one-ness with the White House, who then come out of the theater all pumped up and ready to...register voters. But that has indeed been all the rage. And that was *exactly* Moore's intent: he has stated that "It's my personal aim that Bush is removed from the White House" (*New York Times*, 24 June), adding that he hoped the film would "inspire people to get up and vote in November" because "We cannot leave this to the Democrats this time to f--k it up and lose" (London *Guardian*, 17 May). Moore's perspective is one shared by many, particularly those who have been out on the streets demonstrating against the "war on terror," that Kerry and the Democrats are nothing to get excited about, but that they nevertheless deserve support, however critical, because Bush is so damn intolerable. Behind this "anybody but Bush" enthusiasm is a fundamentally liberal—and dangerous—view of American democracy.

Moore's vignette on the chicanery around the 2000 elections is compelling. He casts a spotlight on black oppression in the footage of black Congressional representatives rising in the Senate to protest the disenfranchisement of black voters and the fraudulence of Bush's "victory," only to be ruled out of order by an Al Gore unwilling to fight for his election victory because to do so would highlight capitalist America's disregard for black people and undermine the legitimacy of the imperial presidency. That nothing changed shows exactly why the black Democrats are kept around—to head off outrage and revolt against this racist, capitalist order, particularly among black Americans, whenever it breaks out.

Moore believes that the American people have been betrayed by a small clique of reactionary thieves (the Bush administration and its corporate network) and a few spineless Democrats. In other words, he thinks it's Bush & Co. who have violated a national unity that must be restored based on the sensibilities of the common people. In his words, a Democratic victory brings us a step closer to getting "this country back in the hands of the majority" (*New York Times*, 24 June). But there is and can be no national unity because this society is divided into social classes with mutually hostile interests. The whole of society

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La Migra, LAPD Terrorize Latinos, Blacks

Los Angeles

The past few weeks have seen massive Border Patrol roundups of Latino immigrants in Southern California. From June 4 to June 15 alone, over 400 people were detained by a recently formed 12-man "Mobile Patrol Group" in neighborhood sweeps near immigrant shopping centers, bus stations, churches, schools and other public places in Ontario, Corona, Escondido and the San Diego area, striking fear into the entire immigrant Latino community. Terrorized parents, fearful of being separated from their children, have stayed home and kept their children out of school. Stores and shopping centers have been empty. Many are afraid to drive or take public transit for fear of being stopped. Mexican president Vicente Fox, visiting the U.S. at the time, sent a formal diplomatic protest against the roundups to the U.S. government. Racist anti-immigration forces, mobilized in part by right-wing talk radio such as the "John and Ken Show," have harassed the offices of immigrant rights organizations like the Mexican American Legal Defense

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Peter Holderness

Spartacists join June 26 immigrant rights march in downtown L.A. against Border Patrol raids.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 830 | 6 August 2004

Break with the Democrats! For a Workers Party!

Bush, Kerry Push "Anti-Terror" Hysteria

DeCrow/Newsday

New York City cop from the heavily armed Hercules "anti-terrorism" unit stakes out Wall Street.

This summer's cynical media circuses, the Democratic and Republican national presidential conventions, have a sinister overlay, as the Homeland Security department decreed both "special security events." These red-white-and-blue capitalist spectacles—whose platforms are nonbinding, whose delegates decide nothing, and whose nominees, John Kerry and George Bush, are predetermined—are surrounded by massive state surveillance. Inside the Democratic National Convention (DNC), it looked a lot like a Republican rally, as after the liberals pushed the "anybody but Bush" line all year, what they got was a candidate trying to out-Bush Bush in flag-waving tough-cop rhetoric. John Kerry promptly embraced the 9/11 Commission Report, with its appalling bipartisan proposals to ratchet up state repression, stating on July 27, "I will and I can wage a more effective war on terror than George Bush."

As U.S. forces continue their cruel and ruthless occupation of Iraq, the Democrats call only for more domestic repression and a stronger military. They are no "lesser evil," but the partner party of the Republicans in administering capitalism, only with a facade of being "uniters" of all Americans. They just lie through their teeth about caring for blacks, women and working people, then they stick the knife into them. We working-class socialists say: U.S. out of Iraq now! Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution!

For the DNC in Boston, armed Coast Guard boats patrolled the harbor and 40 miles of road were shut down, while a *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* razor-wire steel cage outside the Fleet Center —the "free speech zone"—was sensibly ignored by most protesters. In New York City, elderly residents near Madison Square Garden are being warned to stay indoors and stock up on supplies for the duration of the Republican invasion, while organizers of the main protest are being shunted to the shadeless and barren West Side Highway, ordered to stay off the grass in Central Park. Sheepishly, United for Peace and Justice leaders are not fighting this, not even going to court, though the right to free speech and political protest in Manhattan's largest public park is a basic First Amendment right.

9/11 Commission Report: Blueprint for State Repression

Repeatedly pumping the fear factor of another terrorist attack, as the Bush administration does every time it feels a political threat, the Homeland Security department even toyed with postponing the entire election! *Newsweek* (19 July) exposed Homeland Security head Tom Ridge's crass ploy, reporting that he asked the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel (the same crew advising Bush he could torture at will) to look into shutting down the elections in case of a terrorist attack. A strange new agency, the "U.S. Election Assistance Commission," asked Ridge to seek emergency legislation from Congress empowering Homeland Security to postpone the election in order to "secure the election" in the words of a Homeland spokesman—like "burning the village in order to save it" during the Vietnam War.

As for the Democrats, their national convention was an orgy of flag-waving patriotism showcasing veterans of past U.S. wars, with Kerry's Vietnam combat role being played to the max. His subsequent involvement in antiwar protests was carefully obscured. "We are a nation at war," Kerry said in his address, promising, "I will build a stronger American military." Watching Kerry's publicity film with its mawkish sentimentality, mesmerizing Spielberg Hollywood touches, and the glittering river wake of Kerry's patrol boat, you'd have thought the Mekong Delta was in the "American heartland." We say that it was a very good thing for the workers of the world that the U.S. was ***defeated*** in its dirty imperialist war in Vietnam by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants! Today we defend Vietnam, as well as Cuba, North Korea and China, against U.S. imperialist threats, as workers states ripped out of the hands of capitalism, despite their bureaucratic deformations.

The "anybody but Bush" sentiment pushed by liberals, and pandered to by the reformist left, means that working people and young activists opposed to the war and occupation of Iraq and the diminution of democratic rights carried out in the name of the "war on terror" are being told to vote for Kerry. The Bush administration has seized on the September 11 attacks to ratchet up repression at home and abroad. But in this they are not in any way challenged by the Democrats, who are merely trying to sell themselves to the bourgeoisie as more effective implementers of Bush's policies. The only road forward for working people is the struggle to build a workers party to get what they need, a workers government.

The mass media as well as Republicans depict the DNC's militarist theme as so much electoral rhetoric. But the notion that Kerry is actually a sheep who has temporarily donned wolf's clothing—a view pushed by both Democratic Party liberals and Republican rightists—is profoundly wrong. As a representative of the American capitalist class, Kerry is sincere in maintaining that he could direct the U.S. armed forces more effectively than his Republican rival. Kerry calls for upping total U.S. troop strength by 40,000 men, and not just because he thinks saying that will help win the election. Significant elements of the American ruling class (including within the Pentagon) now view the takeover of Iraq as a very costly mistake for which they blame Bush. ***Their*** problem is that to just pull out would be seen as a humiliating defeat for the self-proclaimed "world's only superpower."

Down With the Neocolonial Occupation of Iraq!

On July 9, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a 511-page "Report on the U.S. Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq." Even with some 20 percent blacked out by censors, the report thoroughly refutes the shoddy, outrageous official rationales given for the Iraq invasion and occupation, which have slaughtered an estimated 13,000 Iraqis in an already devastated land. The U.S. death toll has risen to over 900. The bipartisan report confirmed once again what has been well known: Saddam Hussein was ***not*** an imminent threat, Iraq did ***not*** have chemical and biological weapons, Iraq was

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How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!...4

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Philippines: Racist American Imperialism Forged through Blood and Torture

Drawing conveys barbarism and savagery of U.S. occupation forcas in the Phlllippines following 1898 Spanish-Amarican War.

NY Public Library

3 June 2004

Dear Editor,

While George Bush feigns shock and sheds crocodile tears over the torture of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, deeming it an "abhorrent" and an "un-American" deed of a few "rogue" soldiers, the fact is that torture and other atrocities inflicted on nations worldwide, to better subjugate them, are inherent traits of American imperialism since its emergence as a contender for world domination toward the end of the 19th century. In its swift and easy victory in the Spanish-American War in 1898 the U.S. seized Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, ushering in more than a century of imperialist plunder and freebooting.

The conquest of the Philippines was not as rapid as the defeat of the Spanish forces. It took a three-year war of ruthless and racist extermination by 126,000 U.S. troops to crush the Filipino nationalist fighters led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Up to a million people were massacred in a heroic uprising that fueled anti-colonial sentiments in the region. Whole villages were burned down. Men, women and children were herded into concentration camps where many perished of hunger and disease. Women and girls were systematically raped. General Jacob Smith, butcher of the Native Americans massacred at Wounded Knee, ordered his troops to turn the island of Samar into a "howling wilderness." "I want no prisoners. I wish you to kill and burn, the more you kill and burn the better you please me." Colonel Arthur Lockwood cited the bible as a justification for extermination: "The Almighty destroyed Sodom," he declared, "notwithstanding the fact that there were a few just people in that community." A correspondent covering the war wrote that American soldiers killed "men, women, children, prisoners and captives, active insurgents and suspected people, from lads of ten and up...an idea prevailing that the Filipino was little better than a dog" who belonged on "the rubbish heap." Torture of captives was rampant. The most infamous torture technique was the so-called "water cure." Vast quantities of seawater were forced down the throat of a prisoner. His stomach was then stepped on so that water shot out three feet in the air. Most victims did not live long afterwards. This and other brutal techniques would later be applied by Washington's death squad regimes in Latin America, passed on at the notorious School of the Americas—more aptly known as the School of the Assassins—in Fort Benning, Georgia.

In the southern islands of the Philippines the colonial army was met by a fierce resistance from the Moro Muslims. In 1906 U.S. troops carried out what came to be known as the Moro Massacre, where at least nine hundred Filipinos, including women and children, were trapped in a volcanic crater on the island of Jolo and shot at and bombarded for days. Viewing a widely distributed photo that showed U.S. soldiers overlooking piles of Filipino dead in the crater, W.E.B. Du Bois declared in a letter to Moorfield Storey, president of the Anti-Imperialist League (and later first president of the NAACP), that it was "the most illuminating thing I have ever seen. I want especially to have it framed and put upon the walls of my recitation room to impress upon the students what wars and especially Wars of Conquest really mean." Commending Leonard Wood, the general who had carried out the massacre, Theodore Roosevelt wrote him, "I congratulate you and the officers and men of your command upon the brilliant feat of arms wherein you and they so well upheld the honor of the American flag."

It was in reference to the Philippines that Rudyard Kipling coined the racist-imperialist catchword of the "white man's burden." The U.S. imperial trampling over the dark-skinned peoples of the Pacific was justified with an outpouring of vile racist trash. The *Nation* railed in 1899 that the annexation of the Philippines, Hawaii and Guam brought under U.S. jurisdiction a "varied assortment of inferior races which, of course, could not be allowed to vote." Military commanders incited their troops for the slaughter with lynch mob tirades against the "n-----s." Racism was rampant within the army as Jim Crow laws, codified by the Supreme Court with the *Plessy* decision two years before the war, were enforced. Four black regiments stationed in the Philippines were segregated and black soldiers were barred from "whites only" restaurants, barbershops and brothels. Not surprisingly many black soldiers solidarized with the embattled Filipino nationalist fighters. William Simms, a black soldier, recalled how he was reproached by a young Filipino boy who challenged him: "Why don't you fight those people in America who burn Negroes, that make a beast of you?" A large number of black soldiers deserted. Many went over to join the Filipino side. Famous among them was private David Fagen, who for two years wreaked havoc upon the occupying American army.

The reconquest of the Philippines during World War II was a bloody affair in which whole cities were razed to the ground and tens of thousands of civilians died. As soon as Japan had been dislodged from the islands, the U.S. occupiers disarmed and crushed the Stalinist-led Hukbalahap guerrillas who were a major force in the fight against Japan.

The Philippines was granted formal independence in 1946. Despite more tban a half century of nominal independence, the archipelago remains an impoverished semicolonial vassal of the U.S.

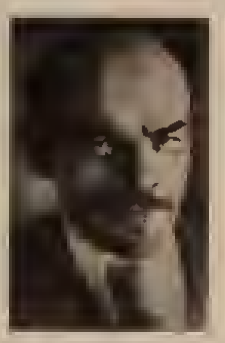
Addressing the Philippines Congress in October 2003, George Bush, in an ominous warning to the peoples of Iraq, invoked the Philippines as a model of U.S.-sponsored "democracy." True to his words, Bush appointed John Negroponte as the new sheriff of Baghdad as of June 30, sending a clear message on how he intends to run the country. From his days as a political officer (code name for CIA agent) in the American embassy in Saigon in the early 1960s to the early 1980s in Honduras, Negroponte left a trail of blood, assassinations, kidnappings, tortures and disappearances. "In Honduras Negroponte exercised U.S. power in ways that still reverberate throughout that small country," wrote Stephen Kinzer. "Most people who lived or worked in Honduras during the 1980s saw a nation spiraling into violence and infested by paramilitary gangs that kidnapped and killed with impunity" (*New York Review of Books*, 20 September 2001). Negroponte was appointed by the Reagan administration to turn Honduras into a staging area for the contra war and a platform for American military maneuvers, to preside over CIA operations in the region and to shore up the military dictatorship of general Gustavo Martinez. In a 1995 four-part series the *Baltimore Sun* detailed the activities of the notorious CIA-trained and -supported army unit, Battalion 316, that kidnapped, tortured and killed hundreds of citizens. Its victims include students, union leaders, journalists and college professors. Shock and suffocation devices were used in interrogation. "Prisoners often were kept naked and, when no longer useful, killed and buried in unmarked graves."

Comradely,
Salah Shami

TROTSKY

Capitalism and the Concept of Race

A materialist approach to the question of racial oppression begins with the understanding that race is a socially determined category with no basis in science. Writing in the early 1950s, veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser underlined how racial oppression is an inherent feature of U.S. capitalism, inherited from the system of chattel slavery. The forced segregation of black people at the bottom of American capitalist society can be ended only through a workers revolution that establishes an egalitarian, socialist society.



LENIN

The revolutions in Britain, America and France stripped away the veil of religion from knowledge and initiated the age of science and rationalism. Social relations could no longer be explained by reference to God. So a fake "scientific" explanation of the social relations of slavery grew up to justify them. This is the actual foundation of the science of physical anthropology.

Slavery itself was overthrown in the Civil War and Reconstruction. But the needs of tbe American capitalists for compulsory agricultural labor in the South remained. A new semi-capitalistic mode of agriculture grew up in which the semi-slave condition of the freed Negroes was made permanent by the re-establishment of the social relations of slavery: color discrimination buttressed by segregation and race prejudice.

Race thus became a fetish of American capitalism, a system of special exploitation based upon the social relations and customs of a previous mode of production, which had itself been an abomination to society. Stripped of scientific justification, what then remains of *race*? Race is a relation between people based upon the needs of capitalist exploitation. The race concept in anthropology grew out of the social relations of slavery. It was congealed by the adaptation of these obsolete social relations to the needs of capitalist production.

The concept of race has now been overthrown in biological science. But *race* as the keystone of exploitation remains. Race is a social relation and has only a social reality.

—Richard Fraser, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (November 1953), reprinted in *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, "In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser" (1990)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Devisson

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The closing date for news in this issue is 3 August.

No. 830 **6 August 2004**

NOTICE

***Workers Vanguard* skips alternate Issues in June, July and August.**

Our next issue will be dated September 3.

CORRECTION

The Chicago Labor Black Struggle League leaflet, "Protest Chicago Cop Killing of Activist May Molina!", reprinted in *WV* No. 828 (11 June), mistakenly stated that Aaron Paterson "spent 17 years on death row." Paterson was actually imprisoned for nearly 17 years, and he spent more than 13 years on death row.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti: 1947-2004

On July 21, Palestinian activist Farouk Abdel-Muhti died of a heart attack. Detained for nearly two years as a result of his political activities, during which time he was beaten and denied essential medication, Farouk had many years, if not decades, stolen from his life by the U.S. government. Abdel-Muhti was speaking at a panel discussion entitled "Detentions and Torture: Building Resistance" at the Philadelphia Ethical Society. His speech was part of a nationwide tour highlighting his torturous detention, which ended only months before on April 12. Abdel-Muhti thanked his supporters for standing by him throughout his ordeal and advocated continued resistance to imperialism as a clear enemy of humanity. After he finished, he slumped over until his head touched the table. He never regained consciousness. He was three weeks shy of his 57th birthday.

Born in the Ramallah district of Palestine in 1947 and forced into the role of refugee, Farouk arrived in the Western Hemisphere in the early 1960s, living at various times in the U.S. and several Latin American countries, including Honduras. In the early 1970s he settled in the New York City area, where he lived until his abduction by a task force of INS/NYPD marauders in April 2002—the beginning of his brutally nightmarish detention. Abdel-Muhti had come to the attention of racist immigration authorities in 1975 and 1995, but they were unable to deport him, since, as a stateless Palestinian, there was no government that would accept him.

The actual reason for his detention was his anti-imperialist activism, especially his history of advocacy for the national cause of the Palestinians and his opposition to U.S. depredations in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In October of 1999 he had participated in a labor/black mobilization, initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee, that drove the Ku Klux Klan out of New York. In the immediate month before his abduction, Farouk had been instrumental in getting the voices of besieged Palestinians on the airwaves of

Fred Askew

WBAI, the local Pacifica radio station.

Farouk's detention was 718 days of ghoulish torture. In an interview with *Workers Vanguard* after his release, he described the nine different cockroach- and rat-infested facilities he was shunted to and from, one of which was nicknamed "the doghouse" for its unsanitary conditions. He talked about the openly fascistic prison administrators and sadistic guards who beat him while his hands and legs were pinned to a wall. He was beaten twice, thrown into solitary confinement for over eight months and, in January 2003, felt compelled to participate in a hunger strike calling attention to the onerous conditions in the Passaic County Jail in New Jersey. When his leftist literature (including the PDC's brief in defense of Jose Padilla) was confiscated in November 2003, the brutal prison thugs also seized his prescription medicine for hypertension, arthritis and a thyroid condition. There can be no doubt that these hellish conditions criminally undermined Farouk Abdel-Muhti's health.

Our first response to the news of Farouk's death was shock and grief. We first met Farouk in July of 1999, when we joined forces to demand the freeing of Kurdish Workers Party leader Abdullah Öcalan. Despite our political differences, we respected Farouk as a man of principle and integrity. We were honored when, in the months prior to his long-overdue release, Farouk agreed to become a recipient of the Partisan Defense Committee's class-war prisoner defense fund. Our condolences go out to Farouk's fiancée and companion, Sharin Chiorazzo, his son, Tariq Abdel-Muhti, and his close supporters and comrades.

Our second response, of course, is extreme bitterness toward his ruling-class jailers who targeted this courageous man in their bipartisan, ongoing and never-ending "war on terror." In a letter from prison to the PDC on 12 January 2004, Farouk said, "Continue with that policy of support to freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and all of us prisoners, victims of the dirty racist conspiracy that the U.S. government is carrying out, using a brutal police machinery, adopting the same methods and tactics as the Nazis" (our translation from the Spanish).

Our final response is one of homage and respect. Farouk Abdel-Muhti's struggle forced a federal judge to agree to his release, calling his situation "Kafkaesque." This has made it a little harder for the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to indefinitely detain immigrants. Farouk never lost sight that his struggle was tied to the fate of all the detainees. And his last breaths were spent urging renewed struggle against imperialism, the scourge of workers and the oppressed worldwide. While we mourn his death, we honor the life of Farouk Abdel-Muhti. Free all the detainees!

Letters

On the Indian Elections

May 21, 2004

To *Workers Vanguard*:

The victory of the Congress Party last week has been widely seen within India as a "second independence" for the country—a defeat for the forces of communalist hate and economic liberalization. The ruling Hindu-nationalist BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and its NDA (National Democratic Alliance) coalition partners were decisively trounced, especially in the states of Andhra and Tamilnadu. But Congress prepared the way for the rise of the fascists and now promises to continue their policies "with a human face."

The BJP is the political wing of the Hindu fascist fraternity called the Sangha Parivar (Family of Organizations), which includes, besides the BJP, Bhajarang Dal (the military wing), Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS, the ideological wing), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, the cultural wing), and Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP, the student wing). The Sangha Parivar openly preaches hatred of non-Hindus. In practice it targets Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and tribals, but never the Jains or the Parsees who, along with the Hindu merchant caste of Marwaris, make up a large percentage of the Indian big bourgeoisie. And the Christians it goes after are untouchables and tribals who converted in the hope of escaping caste oppression, not the wealthy Syrian Christians of Kerala who are supposed to have been brahmins before they took Christianity.

The Hindu fascists seek to artificially cohere a national Hindu identity from India's prison-house of nations. In power they pushed Hindu patriotism as they sold off the country's state-owned industry to foreign corporations, busted unions, dismantled what meager government-run healthcare there had been, and privatized education. Founded out of the fanatical movement to demolish the Babri mosque in 1992, the BJP's career has been one long incitement to murder and rape. Two thousand Muslims were massacred by Hindu gangs between December 1992 and January 1993 in the aftermath of the Babri mosque demolition. Again in March 2002 more than 2000 Muslims were killed in state-organized pogroms in Gujarat. In 1998 alone, twenty-five priests, pastors, and nuns were murdered, twenty-five nuns raped, and eleven churches or chapels destroyed by the Bhajarang Dal in their campaign of terror against Christians (*Frontline* magazine, January 1999). In 1999 they locked the Christian missionary Graham Stein and his two young sons in their jeep and set fire to it, roasting them alive in broad daylight. In 2002, in the name of the BJP's anti-untouchable and anti-Muslim "cow protection" campaign, a Hindu mob lynched five untouchables in the presence of police for skinning a dead cow scavenged from the roadside. And in Kashmir the BJP carried on the Indian government's policy of atrocities against the Muslim population: last year alone more than 2500 Kashmiris were killed by Indian security forces. In 1998 the BJP government provoked Pakistan by conducting nuclear tests, declaring, "India now has the Hindu bomb."

Until 1991 India relied on aid from the Soviet Union to maintain a large public sector. This is why some people thought of India as socialist. In truth there was as much socialism in Nehru and his Congress as there is butter in butternut squash. Since the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the Indian bourgeoisie has been forced to open the country to all-out imperialist exploitation.

In the forefront of the drive to privatize the Indian economy has been N. Chandra Babu Naidu, who until last week was chief minister of the state of Andhra Pradesh (although he preferred to be called its "CEO"). Naidu, an important coalition partner of the BJP, assiduously

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Workers Hated Ronald Reagan

8 July 2004

Dear *Workers Vanguard*,

I am writing a short letter on the national hoopla over Reagan's death.

On June 10, the day before Reagan was interred after the orgy of mourning, I attended a shop gate meeting at my work location. Most of my workmates attended the meeting. An announcement was read about a day of mourning for Reagan on the following day, Friday, June 11. Workmates were given a compensatory day which they can take up until April 30, 2005. In my department, which is essential and geared towards serving the public, most workers went to work on the day Reagan was interred.

The union shop chairman asked for questions and I raised my hand. I said that many workmates remember that Reagan was no hero of the working class. He was a union-buster. A white old-timer yelled "PATCO!" I continued that it was Reagan who "changed welfare as we know it" and that it was the Democrat Clinton who signed these changes into law. A female worker yelled, "That's right, brother!" I continued that Reagan was an enemy of working people around the world and talked about the invasion by American forces into tiny Grenada. Lastly I mentioned that it took Reagan seven and one half years into his presidency to mention the word AIDS after so much cruel devastation in the community.

After the meeting one worker asked me if I was opposed to the Reagan holiday. My initial impulse was to go to work on "Reagan Day" as an act of defiance. After consideration, I realized that this was wrong. I replied "Absolutely not! As a matter of fact, we need more holidays!"

Several others approached me to talk about the invasion of Grenada, the ruin and suicides of farmers because of Reagan's policies on agriculture. A workmate talked about Reagan's racist code words, for example "states' rights" and about the federal government saying to the racist reactionaries that they can ride roughshod over blacks.

A female worker mentioned that the welfare changes wreaked havoc in the inner cities, putting many single mothers and their children among the homeless population. She also contrasted the company's quick approval of the Reagan day as a holiday with their intransigence regarding MLK Day. The discussions after the meeting also revolved around the anti-Sovietism of Reagan, the Cold War, the Iran-Contra scandal and the colonial occupation of Iraq.

All of the conversations showed the palpable disdain that workers had for Reagan and his policies.

A Transit Worker

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

We print below a forum, slightly edited for publication, given by comrade Don Alexander of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee at a regional educational in New York City on April 3.

AP

Spartacist banner at rally in support of busing and school integration, Boston Common, 1974.

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

PART ONE

I had to take a little time off in preparing this talk to keep from getting too involved in it, and comrade Karen and I went to hear a Southern liberal academic, who had written a book on the history of intermarriage in the U.S., particularly the striking down of the laws on the books that culminated in the 1967 *Loving* case. It was a quite interesting talk, a lot of anecdotes. In listening to his presentation, I noticed that the words "slavery," "segregation," "racism" weren't mentioned once. That's a pretty tall task in America, especially when you're talking about black-white intermarriage, because it's really the question of the persistence of caste. They can't deal with it. It really goes to the heart of this racist capitalist system. He was a rather charming gentleman, as they say.

There is a lot of talk today about multiculturalism, diversity, whiteness and "racialized subjects" and other liberal jargon that essentially attempts to erase the centrality of anti-black racism and black oppression in racist capitalist America. Recently, in preparing this talk, I read something professor Barbara Fields of Columbia University wrote. She was one of the few professors who endorsed our rally at Columbia against the Conservative Club's anti-affirmative action "bake sale." She made the point that all of these academic types are talking about "whiteness" and all this stuff—how the Irish became white—but they never talk about how "African and African-Caribbean immigrants became black." I thought that was a very interesting comment.

The Spartacist League has consistently, over the years, fought for a class-struggle program for black liberation as an inseparable part of the fight for the emancipation of labor from capitalist exploitation. Our program flows from a Marxist understanding of the nature of class society, of the role of class struggle as a motor force of history and the necessity of working-class rule. Capitalists like to dress up their rule in terms of general abstract slogans, pretending that they represent the "general will," the "people" and the like. But in fact, they have an executive committee that runs their affairs to perpetuate their brutal class rule, and that's called the state. This hideously oppressive and unequal society has perfected the machinery of deception and repression. There's a huge mountain of lies claiming that the U.S. is an "open society," a shining beacon of democracy where there are no classes and everybody is either in the middle class or becoming middle class, and where racism has largely been eliminated through civil rights laws, which have leveled the playing field. I know that if I keep on going in this vein you'll run me out of here, because it does make your blood boil.

If you read our publications, *Workers Vanguard*, *Black History*, *Women and Revolution* (which continues to be incorporated in *Workers Vanguard* and *Spartacist*), you'll see that we apply a revolutionary program to fight against national, sexual, racial and all oppression because that is part of our fight for world socialist revolution. In particular, when we raise the slogan for black liberation through socialist revolution, it sums up our strategic tasks. It encapsulates our fight for a third American revolution, a workers revolution that will put an end to this very brutal, decadent and violent ruling class. The realization of the age-long dream of black freedom, that is, the complete smashing of the color bar, can only occur through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. This means confronting the unfinished business of the Civil War—finishing the Civil War, which was a social revolution that destroyed slavery; but the social relations of anti-black racism were incorporated into the capitalist mode of production.

I want to cite part of what the veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser wrote, in particular in his lectures of November 1953, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution." We had a comment about comrade Fraser when we put out the bulletin, "In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser" (*Prometheus Research Series* No.3 [1990]).

We wrote that

> "Although he was hampered by little formal scholarly training, his Marxist understanding and his broad experience in militant struggles with black workers sharpened his insight into the lessons of history. His dedicated study sprang from his conviction that in order to forge a program for black liberation, it is necessary to study the social forces that created the American institution of racial oppression.... To Fraser, understanding the roots of black oppression in the United States was no armchair activity; he carried his theory of Revolutionary Integration into struggle."

And that's really a very appropriate introduction to what I have to say.

We often quote Karl Marx's statement that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." Fraser argued against the prevailing liberal ideology of his day that "prejudice" is the root of black oppression. He said:

> "The racial division of society was born with capitalism and will die only with the death of this last system of exploitation. Before capitalism there was no race concept. There was no skin color exploitation, there was no race prejudice, there was no idea of superiority and inferiority based upon physical characteristics.
>
> "It was the advent of Negro chattel slavery in the western hemisphere which first divided society into races. In a measure the whole supremacy of western capitalism is founded upon this modern chattel slavery. The primary accumulation of capital which was the foundation of the industrial revolution was accrued largely from the slave trade."

This was written in 1953 and is a powerful scientific, materialist analysis that has stood the test of time. It is particularly important because we hear this new-fangled stuff about how race is somehow a "socially constructed category." Fraser also talked about how race was "socially constructed" and noted that as a biological category, race doesn't exist. But he emphasized the unique racial oppression of the American black population, the stigmatization of skin color, which was a product of the system of chattel slavery and was grafted onto the subsequent capitalist system.

Black Oppression and Capitalist Society

What are we fighting for? You have to look at the situation in this country where there is not a class-conscious proletariat today. The proletariat has yet to declare its political independence from the parties of the capitalist ruling class, thanks to the multiple betrayals of the reformists in this country, the petty-bourgeois liberal spokesmen for the black masses and, especially, the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which works overtime to derail any serious struggle.

It was over one hundred years after the Civil War that black people got the right to vote, and today black former prisoners have to fall on their knees before Florida governor Jeb Bush to beg for their rights back. This is a reflection of the fact that under capitalism, democratic rights are reversible and that every step of the way we have to fight.

The class divisions in this society are increasingly sharp and hard to paper over. Therefore, the lies become more brazen and the repression more severe. The U.S.

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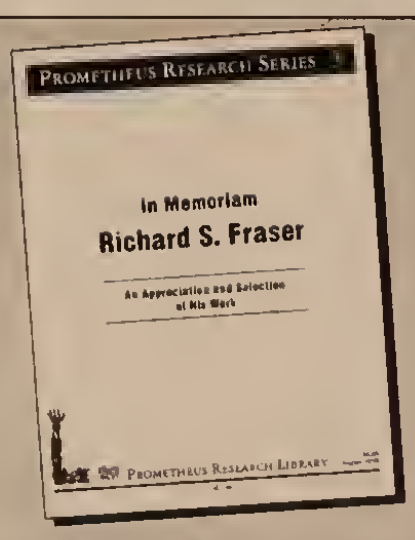

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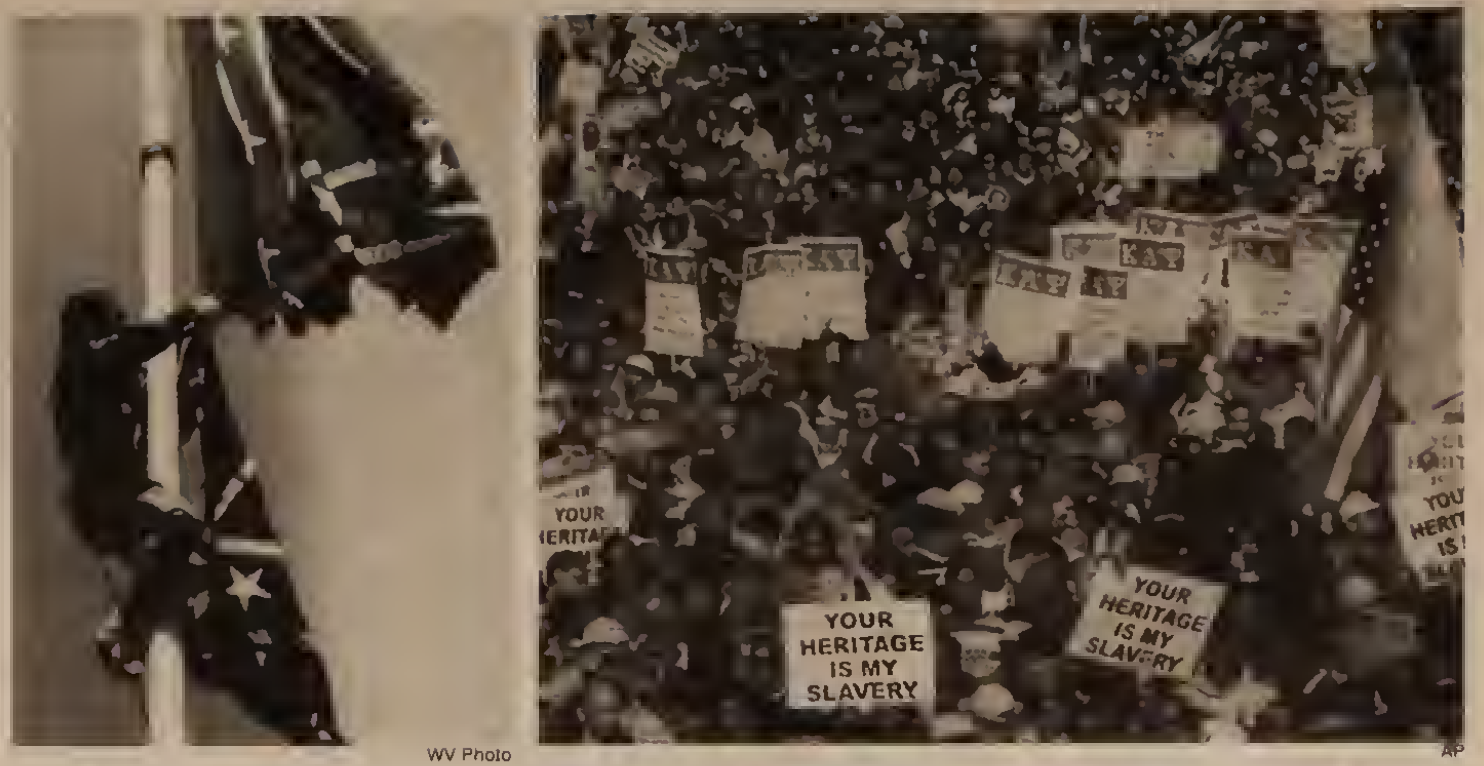
imperialists say that those who are resisting the imperialist occupation of Iraq simply don't want to see that freedom has taken root. If you're standing in an employment line here with no prospects for a job in sight—which is the fate of millions—this will sound pretty hollow because these sweet-sounding words of "freedom," "equality" and "democracy" are coming out of mouths of the parasitic ruling class of the most brutal imperialist murderers in history. No, what they mean by "freedom" is the right to starve and to have their boots ground into your face. We hear a lot today about how opportunities are there if you just have the pluck and the patience to grasp them instead of whining for a handout. You hear a kinder, gentler version of this coming from black capitalist politicians and their mouthpieces, who complain that black people don't stick together like other races, they engage in "self-sabotage," and they hold each other back. You also hear the N-word, which lends legitimacy to this lie of black inferiority and is a reflection of its internalization. This scapegoating of the oppressed black masses in the name of "black power" or "black pride" is a reflection of petty-bourgeois contempt for the poor and oppressed. It is also an expression of the fact that today the black population, no less than the white population, is increasingly class-divided—in fact, even more so in terms of income and other inequalities within the black population.

Recently, I read a comment made by a Howard University black student who attended the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the March on Washington where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech—an event that Malcolm X correctly dubbed the "farce on Washington." What she had to say was, perhaps, typical of a certain train of thought: "We are tired of the struggle for equality and we are tired of the struggle for integration.... If the response is positive, we must organize. If the response is negative, we must organize."

This despairing tone is a product of the utter absence of any militant black leadership today and the failure of liberal integrationist programs. It is understandable, but it must be combatted. Consider who spoke at the rally, and you can understand this. Among others, there was the quintessential political hustler, black Democrat Al Sharpton. He railed against the Bush administration, saying that the checks sent to black America have bounced and are coming back marked "insufficient funds." You also had Martin Luther King III preaching a "revolution at the ballot box" in 2004—in other words, vote Democrat. These pro-capitalist hustlers have time and again led anti-racist struggles into the pigsty of bourgeois electoralism and lesser-evilism precisely at the moment when record numbers of black and Latino youth are in jail—when, as one writer describes it, the ghetto and the prisons are on a continuum. In sharp counterposition, we fight to mobilize the power of the multiracial working class—the only class in society which, because of its unique, strategic role in production, can smash this racist capitalist system and establish in its place a collectivized, planned socialist economy that produces for human need and not for profit. This will take a fight to forge a revolutionary leadership of the working class that stands at the head of the struggles of all the oppressed and exploited.



WV Photo AP

Spartacist supporter tore down Confederate flag of slavery and Klan terror at San Francisco Civic Center, 1984. Right: Up to 50,000 demonstrators turned out in January 2000 to demand removal of Confederate flag from Columbia, South Carolina statehouse.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the post-Civil War post-Reconstruction period, you had a certain conservative black leader, Booker T. Washington, who came out openly for segregation, abandoning the fight for social equality. His rise to national prominence came in September 1895 when he delivered a speech at Atlanta's Cotton States and International Exposition. Basically, his speech told black people to stay "in their place." Here is what Washington asserted that black people are:

> "The most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen.... In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.... The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly...."

Now, the black nationalists today are cut out of the same cloth. Their bankrupt, petty-bourgeois program of "self-help" and black capitalism is pushed to line their own pockets and defend their own class interests against the ghetto poor. It tells the masses to accept the racist status quo, a product of centuries of racist oppression, and to stay in their so-called place. The Million Man March, organized in 1995 by the black-separatist, anti-woman, anti-Semitic bigot Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam, stood in this retrograde tradition. No wonder that march met with favor from Bill Clinton's White House. It was an appeasement of the capitalist exploiters. Meanwhile, the jails are filled with American capitalism's victims, the so-called "surplus population" of black and Latino youth. In New York City alone, nearly one out of two black men is unemployed. In the entire country, 40 percent of black children live in poverty. Black women are the fastest-growing victims of the AIDS epidemic. This is a society characterized by unprecedented, truly monstrous class divisions. This is the reality of color-caste oppression. It is not negated by the partial reconfiguration of this caste with the growth of a black middle class, which finds out very quickly that there is an invisible, but very real, glass ceiling.

Stefan Zaklin

Tallahassee, Florida: Black voters protest disenfranchisement in 2000 presidential election.

It is sickening to hear Colin Powell and other representatives of the U.S. imperialist military, which is soaked from head to foot in the blood of the oppressed around the world, talk about how integrated their killing machine is. This was one of the themes of General Wesley Clark on the campaign trail—especially in front of black audiences. Clark even had the nerve to say that the U.S. Army integrated the Little Rock, Arkansas high school in the bloody battle there in 1957. The truth is otherwise. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was president at the time, had opposed the desegregation of the armed forces in 1948. His whole attitude toward the *Brown* decision was to never publicly support it. He made some really gross comments about overgrown black males sitting alongside white girls. He sent the troops into Little Rock to prevent the black masses from ***fighting back*** against the rampaging white racist mobs.

Right now, it is this same supposedly integrated imperialist army that has invaded Iraq and Afghanistan. Its racist, colonial occupation has spilled the blood of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans, along with increasing numbers of Haitians. We demand that the imperialist troops get out—and that the UN stay out. The working class and oppressed here have a very direct stake in opposing this colonialist occupation which can only further embolden world history's most monstrous imperialist power.

The Class-Struggle Road to Black Freedom

Under capitalism—the system of private ownership of the means of production, in which the workers have only their labor power to sell as a commodity—a handful of capitalists are the dominant economic class. So it's futile to appeal to the nonexistent conscience and morality of the ruling class. It is not now and never has been in their interests to have a society based upon genuine peace, plenty and equality. Theirs is a system of production for profit and of anarchy resulting in inevitably recurring economic crises—a boom-bust cycle of overproduction of commodities giving rise to cyclical and structural unemployment and generalized impoverishment. Ending this requires a fight for the abolition of U.S. and world capitalism through international proletarian revolution.

Our interests lie in common, integrated class struggle against the racist capitalist rulers. The Spartacist League stands in the tradition of the early Communist International, the Comintern, under Lenin and Trotsky. Through insistent prodding, they reoriented the American Communist Party by uprooting the colorblindness characteristic of the early socialist movement. That movement had said that it had "nothing special" to offer to blacks and that their oppression was an economic problem. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky fought tooth and nail against this position, and actually

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WV Photo

Norfolk, Virginia longshoremen march against segregation, for school busing in 1983. Labor movement must champion black rights.

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Black Liberation...

(continued from page 5)

laid the basis for the American Communist Party to lead an aggressive fight for black equality in the late 1920s and early 1930s. James P. Cannon—a founder of the Communist Party and early leader of American Trotskyism—wrote his seminal essay "The Russian Revolution and the American Negro Movement" in 1959, five years after the Supreme Court *Brown* decision, as that movement was unfolding. He pointed out:

> "It is customary to attribute the progress of the Negro movement, and the shift of public opinion in favor of its claims, to the changes brought about by the First World War. But the biggest thing that came out of the First World War, the event that changed everything, including the prospects of the American Negro, was the Russian Revolution. The influence of Lenin and the Russian Revolution, even debased and distorted as it later was by Stalin, and then filtered through the activities of the Communist Party in the United States, ***contributed more than any other influence from any source*** to the recognition, and more or less general acceptance, of the Negro question as a *special* problem of American society—a problem which cannot simply be subsumed under the general heading of the conflict between capital and labor, as it was in the pre-Communist radical movement."
>
> —*The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

The Spartacist League's several decades of efforts and principled struggle to mobilize the working class in the fight for black freedom and in the liberation of the working class as a whole stands in this tradition and is unique.

As a consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, which was a gigantic defeat for workers and oppressed around the world, the capitalists have been emboldened to intensify their attacks against hard-won gains. It is no mere coincidence that, beginning in 1991, they have more energetically pushed for the resegregation of the school system—not that they began then, but they stepped on the pedal. There is no Soviet Union today to embarrass U.S. imperialism about the endemic racism which is inherent to this system.

Because of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, consciousness has been thrown back. And this has been in the making for a while. In 1983, Jesse Jackson, a former leader in King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, helped knife protests in defense of busing in Norfolk, Virginia. Coleman Young denounced busing in Detroit when he was the black Democratic mayor there in 1974, agreeing with the Supreme Court decision that struck down cross-district busing of black schoolchildren from the inner city to the white suburbs. In 1997, the historically integrationist NAACP held a debate that called into question integration.

Muhammad Speaks

Adalman/Magnum

Cartoon captures Martin Luther King's cringing pacifism that supported brutal repression of 1960s ghetto explosions. Right: Malcolm X, June 1963.

Furthermore, this retrogression in consciousness has also affected the so-called "progressive," radical black intellectuals such as Robin Kelley and bell hooks, along with outright pro-Democratic Party hip-hop capitalists such as Russell Simmons. Simmons, who slams integration and also pushes black capitalism, helped organize a massive rally at City Hall in June 2003 (some of us sold *Workers Vanguard* at it) which was joined by Democrat Andrew Cuomo to call for not ending, but reducing the sentences of the draconian Rockefeller-era anti-drug laws. This is the same Cuomo who in the Clinton administration, in the Department of Housing, actually used the money that was supposed to go to building new housing to build prisons in upstate New York. So they were down there at City Hall supposedly trying to reform these drug laws. We say: Down with the racist war on drugs! We are for the decriminalization of drugs. The so-called New Democrat Clinton escalated the bourgeoisie's attacks on the ghettos and barrios "to end welfare as we know it," expanding the racist death penalty, and putting about 100,000 more cops on the streets.

In a recent interview, Simmons spelled out his program. He said his program is 40 acres and a Bentley. His undisguised hostility to integration is quite understandable in that light. This is what he said:

> "Economically, some families in our community had more financial stability during segregation. We had the black dentist, the black lawyer, the black teacher. We had jobs. We had things we had to do for our community and services to provide. Integration tore that down. It damaged our economic stability in our little communities.... They took all of our business."
>
> —Henry Louis Gates, *America Behind the Color Line* (2004)

Well, first, what jobs? Ghettos are impoverished hell holes, and in periods of labor shortage, they *used to be* some kind of reserve army of the unemployed—and I stress *used to be*. These people are pushing black capitalism, which is really about feathering their own nests and flipping a bone to the rest of us.

The so-called "left" black feminist, bell hooks, harking back to a mythical golden era of cross-class black unity, argued:

> "That sense of solidarity was altered by a class-based civil rights struggle whose ultimate goal was to acquire more freedom for those black folks who already had a degree of class privilege however relative. By the late 1960s class-based racial integration disrupted the racial solidarity that often held black folks together despite class difference. Pressured to assimilate into mainstream white culture to increase their class power and status, privileged black individuals began to leave the underprivileged behind, moving into predominantly white neighborhoods, taking their money and their industry out of the segregated black world."
>
> —*Where We Stand: Class Matters* (2000)

Well, this is an utterly fantastic description of what actually happened. Some of what she points out, such as who benefited from the civil rights movement, is true. But the notion that there was ever in the past, or that there ever will be in the future, a significant black capitalist class along the lines of the Carnegies, the Mellons and the Rockefellers is utterly fantastic and utopian. Moreover, there is no such thing as "separate but equal." And that's the point: they have capitulated to that.

Now, there's the very voluble left-nationalist academic Robin Kelley. He rhetorically asks, "Integration: What's Left?" (*Nation*, 14 December 1998). He deliberately conflates the struggle for racial integration with ***liberal*** integrationism and submission to white liberal gradualism:

> "Although black civil rights activists had always emphasized 'desegregation'—the removal of all barriers that kept black people from enjoying full access to public facilities, decent housing, education and so on—in most white liberal circles racial integration came to mean solving the 'Negro problem' by bringing black people into formerly all-white institutions.... The goal was to produce fully assimilated black people devoted to the American dream. Sharing power was rarely part of the equation."

And what is his program?

> "Rather than a new integrationist movement under a left-wing banner, I would like to see a new, revitalized left launching a full-scale assault on white privilege—a new divestment campaign in which white people refuse the benefits of a racist society."

In particular, what Kelley is saying to the mass of white workers, which of course happens to be the most numerous class in this society, is: Prove your commitment for the poor and the oppressed by voluntarily impoverishing yourself. This can only reinforce the hold of the white ruling class upon white workers. Moreover, if he took that to any picket line they'd run him out on a rail.

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which was a radical-nationalist organization in Detroit in the '70s, had the opportunity to actually make common cause with white workers. They refused to pass out their leaflets to them. Their program was for more black foremen, for blacks on the board of General Motors and the like. Our program of revolutionary integration, of class struggle, cuts across these kinds of divisive schemes. Our program is to get rid of class exploitation and the brutal racial oppression that props it up, not to pit sections of the oppressed and exploited against each other so that both can be conquered. The depth of the political bankruptcy is astounding, but not surprising.

From our inception in the early 1960s inside the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) as the Revolutionary Tendency, a left-wing opposition that fought against that party's abandonment of a revolutionary working-class program, we have emphasized common class struggle against a common class enemy. We say that there is an alternative to liberal integrationism—which favors the gradual absorption of "deserving blacks," one by one, into this system—and pro-Democratic Party capitalist politics. And that's the program of revolutionary integrationism, the struggle for black liberation through overturning this racist capitalist system by linking the struggles of the ghettos to the organized labor movement under a class-struggle leadership.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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Berlin: Racist "Anti-Germans" Attack Mumia Supporters, Immigrants

We print below the translation of a leaflet issued July 8 by the Spartakist-Jugend, youth group of the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD), German section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), against the anti-immigrant provocation threatened by the sinister so-called "anti-Germans." On July 10, the leaflet was distributed among the over 200 counterdemonstrators who mobilized in defense of the minority and immigrant residents of Berlin's Neukölln and Kreuzberg districts, outnumbering the pro-Israel, anti-immigrant "anti-Germans."

Krasse-Zeiten

July 10, Berlin: "Anti-Germans" stage racist provocation in Neukölln immigrant district, carrying Israeli and American flags.

Under the slogan "Against the anti-Zionist consensus," the so-called "anti-Germans" intend to carry out a racist provocation on July 10 in Hermannplatz, in the center of Berlin's Neukölln immigrant district. Led by the openly pro-imperialist racists of the "Bahamas Editorial Board," they aim to deliver ammunition to the racist German capitalist state and SPD [Social Democratic Party] bloodhound [Interior Minister] Schily for the anti-immigrant "war on terror." The Bahamas Internet call, signed among others by the misnamed "Antifa [anti-fascist] Northeast Berlin," employs every racist code word conceivable. The talk there is of "hate preachers" [*Hassprediger*], a term straight out of the new so-called "immigration law" [*Zuwanderungsgesetz*] sponsored by the "Red"/Green [SPD/Green Party coalition government] and the CDU [Christian Democrats], under which non-Germans can be deported based on verbal statements. They fantasize about a "district militia" in Neukölln and Kreuzberg, which is supposed to have cleared "Zionist-free zones"—a vile equation of immigrant neighborhoods with the "nationally liberated zones," that is, areas in which no leftist or immigrant sets foot out of fear of Nazi terror.

Neukölln and Kreuzberg are the areas in Berlin that are labeled so-called "problem districts" by the capitalist SPD/PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] Senate [local government] because that's where many Turks, Kurds, Arabs and other ethnic minorities live who are especially hard hit by massive unemployment and social cuts. They are precisely the target of the "anti-Germans," who advise the cops how to spot Palestinians, for example. Arab immigrants in particular were also the victims of the racist *Rasterfahndung* [profiling of immigrants] after September 11, 2001 carried out by the Berlin Senate. To stop such walking police traps as the Bahamas march on July 10, what is necessary is an integrated mobilization of trade unionists and immigrants. The whole point of this march is to mobilize a much greater threat to the immigrant community of Berlin than the "anti-Germans" themselves—the racist German state. The "anti-Germans" carry out these provocations precisely in the hope of inciting justified anger from immigrants and leftists, and thus giving the cops another pretext to beat and jail them.

It was just this method that resulted in one of the incidents that Bahamas gives as a reason for their march. We did not witness the incident and must therefore rely on the statements of those involved. At the Carnival of Cultures on May 30, the Action Coalition for Mumia Abu-Jamal, which is supported by the Revolutionary Communists (RK), took part with a float. A young man of immigrant background was walking next to this float wearing a T-shirt with a Palestinian flag and red flag, and the words "Anti-Zionist Action," an adaptation of the symbol of the German Communist Party's "anti-fascist action" from the early 1930s. For this, he was heckled and physically attacked as an "anti-Semite" by several "anti-Germans" from the group "Kritik & Praxis" [K&P].

> "Outnumbering him, they attacked the wearer of said T-shirt first verbally and then bodily. After he had repeatedly demanded that they refrain, and they however continued the attack, he called for support. At which point four to five people, all of non-German background, rushed to his aid and successfully fended off the attack."
>
> —Statement of the persons affected by the reactionary/Zionist assault at the Carnival of Cultures, June 2004

The "anti-Germans" did what they do best and called the cops. The victim (!) of the attack was brutally arrested—he was beaten and choked. "After many hours, the arrested man was released from police custody with a court proceeding for dangerous bodily harm" (ibid.). ***Down with the charges! Self-defense is no crime!***

With their charges of anti-Semitism, the "anti-Germans" seek to portray all critics of the Zionist Israeli state as tending toward fascism, in order to provoke further assaults on them. It wasn't the first time that the T-shirt wearer has been in the cross hairs of the "anti-Germans." At the Day X student demo against the Iraq war last year, he had half a tooth knocked out, and at an anti-fascist demo in Köpenick on March 13 he was harassed and threatened by a mob of some 20 "anti-Germans" because of the same T-shirt, as reported on Indymedia (14 March): "Go back to Kreuzberg, where you come from!" Now K&P complains that this time their victim didn't wait for them to knock the rest of his teeth out, but called for help!

A statement issued shortly afterward by the "anti-Germans" on the events at the Carnival began a campaign to isolate the RK, smearing them as "violent anti-Semites" and calling to drive them out of "left structures." There have already been attempts to exclude the RK from left demos on the basis of this "anti-German" smear sheet. The defenders of the T-shirt wearer have issued a statement denouncing this as lies and distortion, and making clear it was their comrade who was attacked. Now Bahamas gives the events at the Carnival as pretext for their July 10 provocatinn. They grossly lump it together with a recent, *actual*, anti-Semitic assault on an Israeli Jew—equating anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism, just as [Foreign Minister] Joschka Fischer does, in this way whitewashing the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz in the eyes of "democratic" public opinion! (On anti-Semitism and Zionism, see "Holocaust, 'Collective Guilt' and German imperialism," *Spartacist* [German-language edition] No. 20, Summer 1998.)

K&P has provided Bahamas with the "through ball" [like in soccer] for the July 10 march, even if they're not officially endorsing the call. In the same way, K&P and Bahamas worked together in a provocation against an antifa demo in Hamburg on January 31 (see *Spartakist* No. 154). The Bahamas statement is further marked by a racist tirade against Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom they slander as an "anti-Semite" who calls for the "murder of Jews." This attack on Mumia, a black journalist who remains framed up on death row in the U.S., makes disgustingly clear that the "anti-Germans" like Bahamas have nothing to do with the left. It is the sort of garbage you'd expect from the Fraternal Order of Police, the racist cop brotherhood in Pennsylvania that wants to see Mumia dead! Bahamas' hatred for Mumia reflects the hatred of the American bourgeoisie toward the black population of the U.S.

The "anti-German" campaign against the RK and Mumia's supporters finds disturbing acceptance and support (implicit and explicit) among sections of the Autonomes, including those who reject the open racism and pro-imperialism of Bahamas. In a disgusting capitulation before the racist campaign, the (ex-?) antifa club Köpi canceled a solidarity concert for Mumia on June 11 because the Action Coalition for Mumia refused to distance itself from the "Anti-Zionist Action" T-shirt. In a statement on the cancellation, Köpi goes so far as to justify the "anti-German" assault, saying "Whoever wears such a symbol, simply risks getting a beating!"

That leftists would sabotage the defense and solidarity efforts for Mumia is indeed despicable. He is a courageous and outspoken opponent of racist and imperialist oppression. We Spartacists have actively fought for some 15 years to make his case known internationally, above all to mobilize the power of the working class to demand his freedom. For background information, see *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* (September 2001), which documents his innocence. ***Free Mumia! Down with the racist death penalty!***

Other Autonome groups support the witchhunt against the RK through helping exclude the RK from antifa and other coalitions, adding their signatures to the "anti-German" statement, or simply through shamefaced silence. In particular, the Autonomes and leftists who capitulate before the "anti-German" campaign are in hysterics over the "anti-German" portrayal of the RK as violent "anti-Semites" and "knifers." This is because they still see the "anti-Germans" as part of the antifa left, and not as what they are—violent racists in the service of the bourgeoisie of Auschwitz. The "anti-German" campaign is a perfidiously crafted appeal to racist prejudices. Like the state and the [right-wing] Springer Press, the "anti-Germans" rail against Arab and Turkish "street gangs." We have only contempt for those who spinelessly capitulate to such racist demagogy!

As already noted, we don't know all the details of the events at the Carnival of Cultures. But we don't need to know every detail to know what the "anti-Germans" are, and what their history is! The "anti-Germans" are no leftists; they are supporters of the U.S.-led colonial occupation of Iraq and of Israeli state terror against the Palestinians. They are racist handmaidens for the "war on terror" against the Muslim minority and all immigrants pursued by the SPD/Green government. As we exposed in *Spartakist*, "anti-German" groups rake in the cash from the German capitalist state ("'Anti-nationals/Anti-Germans': Goons for the SPD/Green Government," *Spartakist* No. 152, Fall 2003). They have repeatedly attacked leftist opponents of Zionist state terror. We ourselves were the target of physical attacks, as "anti-German" goons attacked two of our events at Humboldt University a year ago and slandered us as "anti-Semites." The Zionists claim that defending the Palestinians against Israeli state terror is "anti-Semitic." What they particularly hate about us is that our internationalist position destroys this lie: we fight for the perspective of Arab-Hebrew workers revolution against Israel's capitalist rulers. In the framework of capitalism, there is no just solution when two nations, as in Israel/Palestine, lay claim to one and the same territory. Either the Zionist bourgoisie oppresses the Palestinians, or the terms of oppression reverse. On 3 July 2003 we had to interrupt and move our event because they ignited a smoke bomb and called the cops. In response, we campaigned for our self-defense and for the defense of the left, appealing to other leftists to oppose such attacks, and we aggressively exposed the true character of the "anti-Germans" to politically isolate them.

As Trotskyists, we have principled political differences with the Maoist/Guevarist RK, but we stand for the principle of non-sectarian defense within the left and labor movement. An injury to one is an injury to all! The "anti-Germans" are a real threat to leftists and immigrants, and we stand for the right of the RK and others to defend themselves against attacks by the "anti-Germans." As can be seen by their pogrom-style call for the July 10 rally, every time the "anti-Germans" are successful in pulling off a provocation, the scope of their targets broadens: along with immigrants and leftists in Neukölln and Kreuzberg, they also direct their attacks against the reformist daily *junge Welt* and the liberal Green MP Ströbele. ***Down with "anti-German" attacks against leftists and immigrants! Stop the witchhunt against RK and supporters of Mumia! Down with the racist "war on terror"! Full citizenship rights for all who live here! Defend the Palestinians against Israeli state terror!*** ■

Young Spartacus

DNC Protests Tailored for Democrats

Reporter's Notebook from Boston by Gershon Brown

The Democratic National Convention (DNC) served as a publicity blitz and party for party functionaries, with scripted-to-the-minute speeches delivered to scripted applause over the strains of lite-rock, with intermissions for cocktails and hobnobbing with Hollywood stars. For the Democrats, one of the two central ruling parties of American capitalism, the convention authorized their candidate of choice to command the bloody U.S. state for the next four years. For various unsavory and reactionary groups, from the Scientologists to Falun Gong to crazed anti-abortionists, it was an opportunity to present their cause to the media zoo. But for those intrepid leftist protesters who came to Boston, there were random bag checks, Military Police manning subway stations, police clad in riot gear swarming thick as beetles and a barbed-wire-ringed police pen masquerading as a "free speech zone"—all under the guise of "public safety" and a manufactured "terror" hysteria.

The liberal and reformist outfits behind the DNC protests tried to organize the relatively small "actions" so as to pose no real challenge to or break from the Democrats in keeping with the "Anybody but Bush" sentiment. In fact, the protests were largely designed as attempts to channel outrage at the repressive imperialist policies of American capitalism into lowest-common-denominator pro-Democratic Party politics.

Democratic Party Congresswoman Maxine Waters was scheduled to speak to Sunday's ANSWER rally against the U.S. occupation of Iraq. On Tuesday, the second day of the convention, "Billionaires for Bush" led a march to the Republican headquarters. Dennis Kucinich, who had endorsed Kerry the previous week, appeared back outside the convention to rally against the destruction of civil liberties on Wednesday. By Thursday, Waters and Kucinich were slated to be in the midst of cheering crowds at the Fleet Center as John Kerry invoked his military past and promised the recruitment of 40,000 more U.S. troops.

Nader to the Socialist Movement: Drop Dead

The Friday before the DNC, Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club comrades swung by a Ralph Nader campaign stop at Harvard University. In a halting introduction to Nader, a Socialist Alternative (SAlt) member expressed great hope in a "movement" surrounding this capitalist politician and almost apologetically managed to tack on a brief addendum that, in his, y'know, *personal* opinion, he'd like to see a movement against capitalism emerge from the campaign. Fat chance! Behind typical "we the people" rhetoric, Nader has courted "disaffected" Republicans and selected stockbroker (and onetime cadre of the reformist Socialist Workers Party) Peter Camejo as a running mate—a choice making Nader's candidacy more palatable to leftist groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO). Nader made absolutely clear that his candidacy was intended to pull the Democrats toward the left and away from "corporate" influence. He was so proud of this image that he repeatedly mimed pulling a rope.

July 29: Boston police push back demonstrators who moved out of the official "protest zone" toward the DNC site.

I got up and told him straight out that I wasn't voting for Bush, Kerry or him. I raised his unwavering commitment to capitalism: his anti-immigration positions, which he expressed in an interview with Pat Buchanan by saying, "I don't like the idea of legalization because then the question is how do you prevent the next wave and the next?" (*American Conservative*, 21 June); and his opposition to an immediate, unconditional withdrawal of troops from Iraq. For us, the withdrawal of troops from Iraq is the first step to opening the way to revolutionary class struggle by the working and oppressed peoples of the region.

Nader mostly gave me a straight answer, too. He said he is for small-scale capitalism, governed by producers and consumers alike, and argued that socialism won't work because people don't want to take enough responsibility for their own lives. Furthermore, he assured me that the "Iraqi people" wanted to keep the U.S. troops in place. But when it came to the issue of immigration, he told me to "go ask Peter Camejo," before snapping that socialists can't think for themselves. Later in the discussion, he told a supporter of American Indian activist and political prisoner Leonard Peltier that he wasn't for freedom or clemency but only a "new trial."

Organic Lawns and Democratic Pawns

Across town, thousands of liberal social activists gathered at the University of Massachusetts at Boston for the weekend to attend the Boston Social Forum (BSF)—purposefully organized before but not during the DNC so as not to rile pro-Democrat feathers. Despite its overwhelmingly liberal politics, the BSF gave us an opportunity to present our revolutionary program to a range of social activists and engage in debate with other leftist organizations.

SAlt spent their "Is a Socialist World Possible?" workshop explaining that they didn't want to be seen as "groupies for Nader." But it is this role that SAlt has played for months (see "Ralph Nader, ISO and Socialist Alternative: Unsavory at Any Speed," *WV* No. 827, 28 May), including at the Harvard rally. SAlt was in a hurry to leave their workshop for Nader's Harvard appearance particularly after we put to them questions about the track record of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI), to which SAlt is affiliated. Among other issues, we spoke to the London-based CWI's failure to make the elementary call for British troops out of Northern Ireland and its shady dealings with fascist elements in Russia (see "Taaffeite CWI: From Yeltsin's Barricades to the Augean Stables," *WV* No. 828, 11 June).

At the BSF we had numerous discussions with youthful supporters of the ISO who considered a vote to Nader to be a step toward breaking from the Democratic Party. When presented with Nader's actual positions, which differ only slightly from Kerry's on issues like the occupation of Iraq, some ISOers would revert to defending the merits of Nader's vision of small-scale as against "big" capitalism. But there is absolutely nothing progressive about "small" capitalism—the goal of socialists is to vastly expand production through a proletarian revolution that expropriates the ruling class and abolishes private ownership and the market economy so as to eliminate material scarcity on a global scale. As we pointed out to ISO supporters, the ISO's hostility to the perspective of independent proletarian struggle to rip industry out of the hands of the capitalists is integrally linked to its refusal to defend against U.S. imperialism the gains of those revolutions that succeeded in this task, above all the former USSR, product of the Bolshevik-led 1917 Russian Revolution.

Searching through workshops on "Organic Care of Lawns and Lawnscapes" and "Psychodynamics of Empire," the BSF began to feel a bit like cable television—500 channels with nothing on. But our comrades found more events to attend. The workshop by the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism (CoC) on "The Domestic Effects of Corporate Globalization," featuring among others Angela Davis and Manning Marable, was one of the more well-attended BSF events.

This workshop made clear how "Anybody but Bush" means "Anything but Revolution." Davis and Marable addressed some of the conditions of black oppression, describing the massive number of unemployed, incarcerated and disenfranchised black people in the U.S. But black "radicals" like Davis and Marable cynically use their authority as civil rights movement veterans and ostensible socialists to head off any challenge to racist American capitalism. Our intervention broke through the unity-mongering, resign-yourself-to-the-Democrats consensus of the speakers. It unmasked the reformists' classless rhetoric, which is meant to obscure how it is going to take a socialist revolution to achieve black liberation.

In response, Davis and Marable were compelled to defend their reformist politics. According to Marable, one of the goals of the broad democratic "movement" is to find methods to reach people, and they're not going to be socialists, so if it gets them out to the polls, if it gets them to recognize that actions must be taken.... In other words, all "the people" can understand is to vote for the Democrats, which fits with Marable's overall do-nothing, dead-end strategy.

Our own workshop at the BSF, calling to "Unchain Labor/Black Power" and "Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism" to build a fighting workers party, stuck out like a bright red thumb. Our comrade's presentation put the current elections in some historic perspective and tore through the myth of the good old Democratic Party that has been "lost." From "pacifist" Woodrow Wilson's entry into the bloody WWI to FDR's crushing of labor under the WWII wage freeze to the story of how the radical wing of the civil rights movement broke free from Martin Luther King's liberal pacifism, the presentation laid out the history of social progress in America as one of struggle ***against both ruling parties***. At each step, the Democrats

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Young Spartacus

SL/SYC table at the July 25 ANSWER demo. Throughout the week, we raised the call for a break with the Democratic Party of war and racism.

Really, REALLY Authoritarian "Anti-Authoritarians"

Boston SL/SYC Statement: Protest Bl(A)ck Tea Society Anti-Communist Exclusion!

We reprint below a Boston Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club leaflet from July 22 protesting the anarchist Bl(A)ck Tea Society's plan to exclude us from their "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar" on July 27. We distributed the leaflet widely at the Boston Social Forum and at protests against the Democratic National Convention before the "Bazaar." In the end we were not excluded from the event, where we set up a literature table.

Indymedia

Anarchist-organized "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar," July 27. Threatened exclusion of SL/SYC exposes undemocratic core of "anti-authoritarian" ideology.

The self-proclaimed "anti-authoritarian" Bl(A)ck Tea Society (BTS) has banned the revolutionary communist Spartacist League from having a booth at its "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar." The BTS advertised the hazaar, held in conjunction with the Democratic National Convention protests, as an event where "Everyone is invited and encouraged to come set up a 'booth' at the Bazaar that expresses their visions and practices of a better world" (BTS Web site, undated). Not quite. A featured speaker at the BTS bazaar is Green-Rainbow Party activist Dan "The Bagel Man" Kontoff, who ran for City Council last year and supports such capitalist politicians as Felix "friend of the Democrats" Arroyo (former policy advisor to Kerry, no less) and Chuck Turner. Along with Kontoff and his ilk, Buddhists and advocates of running a diesel car on waste vegetable oil are more than welcome; revolutionary communists however are banned in BTS-land.

We learned of this from the BTS July 8 organizing meeting minutes on its Web site, which read in part: "If a group or organization with a history of creating diruptions (sic) at events would like to sign up, or if a group holds principles and intentions that are not respectful or compatable (sic) with the bazaar and want to sign up, they will be contacted and told why they are not welcome. This applies to folks like the SPARTS, World Church of the Creator and so on." To cover for its allegiance to "lesser evil" capitalist politics, the BTS has borrowed from garden variety liberal anti-communism here, outrageously lumping communists with a fascist outfit. Unfortunately for the BTS, this particular slander flies in the face of such facts as the 200-strong united-front demonstration initiated by our comrades in Chicago that drove the head World Church fascist, Matthew Hale, off Northwestern University campus. As comrade Trotsky noted, even slander should make some sense!

The BTS' anti-communist exclusion is motivated by its deeply ingrained hostility to revolutionary, proletarian politics. For our part, we fight for a communist egalitarian society of material abundance, achieved through the victory of socialist revolutions across the planet. Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the Russian workers to power in October 1917 and established the Soviet Union, the first *workers state*, as a beacon for the struggles of workers and oppressed internationally. The BTS follows in the worst of the anarchist tradition, from Prince Kropotkin who preferred the hapless bourgeois politician Kerensky to the Bolsheviks, to the counterrevolutionary exploits of Makhno and others who sided with the imperialist-allied White Guards against the Soviet workers state. At bottom, there isn't much to distinguish the BTS from social democrats and liberals who have and will resort to any means to smear communists as "authoritarian," denouncing the "extremism" of right and left, giving oh-so-"democratic" aid and comfort to the forces of bourgeois repression.

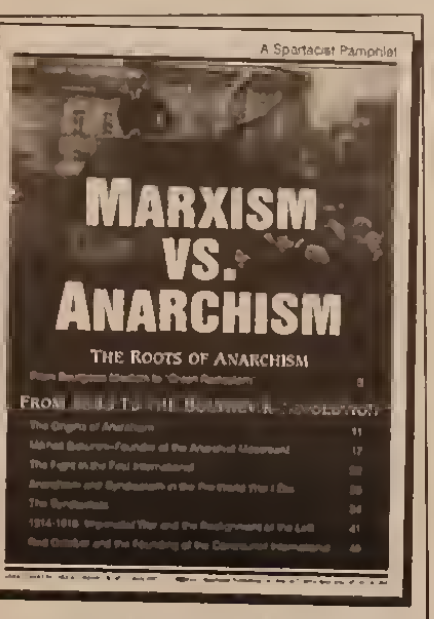
For all its "direct action" posturing, when last seen the BTS was, according to a report on Boston Indymedia (19 May) —a report not refuted by the BTS—an early member of the Boston Democratic National Convention Coalition, along with city councilors and pro-capitalist liberals such as the American Friends Service Committee and United for Justice with Peace. We say clearly: the Democratic Party, like the Republicans, represents the class interests of the capitalists and therefore carries out imperialist war abroad, metes out racist oppression and executes other repressive measures at home, all in order to further the exploitation of labor in the interest of profit. It cannot be pressured to act in the interests of the workers and oppressed. The working class needs its own party to lead the fight for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of workers rule. While the BTS whines about "corporate parties," we pose a proletarian perspective—*class against class*—and a political struggle against the reformist misleaders of the liberal "anybody but Bush" crowd.

Activists coming to Boston who were arrested at the RNC and DNC in 2000 or at last year's FTAA protests in Miami will be interested to learn that the BTS recently joined picket lines organized by the Boston police. The BTS announced this at its July 13 meeting at Lucy Parsons Bookstore. As communists, we know that the cops are not part of the working class, but are an integral part of the repressive apparatus of the racist ruling class, i.e., of the *bourgeois state*. The BTS received its own object lesson in this fact when the cops kicked BTSers off the picket lines after they found out who they were. As opposed to opportunist "anarchists" who solidarize with striking police whose demands are for better compensation for and means to break strikes, terrorize black people and repress all those who would protest the racist, capitalist status quo, revolutionaries fight within the working class to bring to it the understanding that cops are not part of the working class but rather its armed enemy.

The BTS also made clear at its July 13 meeting that its political differences with our Trotskyist politics motivated its exclusion of the Spartacists from the woefully misnamed bazaar. Thus, in response to our protest of this exclusion at that meeting, the BTS responded that it was horrified that we hailed the Soviet Red Army intervention into Afghanistan in 1979 against the CIA-backed *mujahedin* reactionaries. Indeed we did! The only force to defend the rights of women in Afghanistan was the Red Army, while on the other side were Islamic fundamentalists who shot teachers for teaching girls to read, who threw acid in the faces of women who refused to wear a veil. Sundry anarchists, "anti-authoritarians" and run-of-the-mill liberals, hostile to the Soviet Union, sided with the imperialist-backed forces in Afghanistan. We unconditionally militarily defended the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution and hailed the unquestionably progressive intervention into Afghanistan. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan—a treacherous capitulation to U.S. imperialism—was the prelude to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR in 1991-92. That defeat has meant untold misery for the peoples of the former Soviet Union, for the women of Afghanistan and the world's workers and oppressed. The *mujahedin* victory ultimately led U.S. imperialism's Frankenstein's monster—reactionary Islamic fundamentalism à la Osama bin Laden—to turn against its master. That in turn was an opportunity for the U.S. rulers—now unfettered by the USSR, the industrial-military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world—to unleash their endless "war on terror" at home and abroad, slaughtering untold thousands in Iraq.

No doubt the BTS is just as horrified by our unconditional military defense of the Chinese, Cuban, North Korean and Vietnamese deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution and our call for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. Such revolutionary proletarian politics could, after all, disturb the BTS' media-friendly bazaar celebrating "our diversity and our autonomy, our love and our freedom."

In spite of the BTS' wretched politics, we defended them against the MIT administration's attempts to censor them in May, and we will continue to defend them against such attempts and state repression, because we are consistent defenders of workers democracy. As the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World) put it: an injury to one is an injury to all! We call on all those within the left and workers movement to protest the BTS exclusion of the Spartacist League from the "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar." And if you are interested in building a revolutionary workers party that fights for all the oppressed, that aims to get rid of the capitalist system and its state (cops, courts, prisons, military) through socialist revolution, then subscribe to *Workers Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Spartacist League, and find out what the Bl(A)ck Tea Society doesn't want you to know. As Marx said, ignorance never did anybody any good! ■



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NEW YORK CITY

Anti-Abortion Bigot Driven Out; Fascist Provocation Spiked

Boston

Some 2,000 demonstrators turned out on the Boston Common on Sunday, July 25 for a rally and "National March on the Democratic Convention/Bring the Troops Home Now!" called by the Workers World Party-initiated ANSWER coalition. Notwithstanding some lip service to opposing the twin parties of capitalism, the ANSWER demo's demands were directed at pressuring the capitalist Democratic Party, whose national convention began the next day in Boston. Thus, one of the featured invited speakers was prominent Democratic Party pol Maxine Waters—a no-show on the day. Comrades of the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs intervened in the ANSWER demonstration with sales of our revolutionary Marxist newspaper and pamphlets, seeking to win youth and others to the perspective of working-class opposition to both parties of capitalism and the fight for the construction of a revolutionary workers party. At our literature table, a Spartacist banner read: "Break with the Democrats! Build a Workers Party to Fight for Socialist Revolution!"

As protesters converged on the Boston Common, a viciously bigoted opponent of abortion rights and rights for homosexuals raised a provocative sign with a graphic photo of a fetus on one side and an anti-gay slogan on the other. This individual, one Leonard Gendron, is a pastor based in Lawrence, Massachusetts and a prominent reactionary opponent of gay marriage. According to the *Village Voice* Web site (26 July) Gendron "favors an American theocracy." The anti-abortion, anti-gay bigot staged his provocation near our literature table. Comrades from the Spartacist League approached other leftists at the demonstration and joined with them to confront Gendron, expose him and drive him away from the demonstration site. Our chants of "Free abortion on demand!" and "Full democratic rights for gays!" were picked up by many as a crowd of protesters surrounded the bigot. A fascist skinhead, earlier seen lurking in the vicinity, rushed to Gendron's defense. While the anti-gay bigot was escorted from the area by ANSWER marshals, the fascist skinhead received a torn T-shirt and was correctly repelled.

Fascists are deadly enemies of black people, the left, the workers movement, gays and all minorities, a physical threat from which the demonstration had to be defended. In Boston, as elsewhere, these scum have a symbiotic relationship with the crazed religious right who seek to deny women and homosexuals basic rights, who have engaged in the murder of abortion clinic workers and doctors, who have whipped up a climate wherein gay people have been brutally murdered. Gendron's repulsive provocation was met appropriately with protest and exposure. However, outright race-terrorists, i.e., fascists, are not only race-hating ideologues, but are *organized for action against the entire workers movement and must be dealt with as such.*

The fact that skinhead fascists in Boston feel emboldened to openly emerge from their rat holes to stage provocations at largely leftist demonstrations is ominous. This is due in no small part to the fact that at past events sponsored by ANSWER, most recently at demonstrations in support of gay marriage rights, fascist scum have been largely ignored by the demo organizers. Urgently necessary are united-front actions by the integrated workers movement and all of the fascists' intended victims to defend leftist, workers and minority meetings and protests from the fascists' provocations and attacks. The political obstacles to such mobilizations are pro-Democratic Party liberals and trade-union misleaders, as well as their reformist hangers-on, who preach reliance on the capitalist state to keep the fascists at bay. The left and workers movement can and must rely on its own strength to stop these provocations and send the fascists packing!

DNC...

(continued from page 8)

were not the friends of the oppressed but the primary ideological and political obstacle to their liberation. In contrast, we want a workers party based in class and social struggle, fighting for the interests of all the oppressed and stopping short at nothing but socialist revolution.

How "Communist" Progressive Labor Caves In to Bosses

Standing to the left with its "communist" rhetoric and "It's Not Just Bush—It's Capitalism" buttons was Progressive Labor (PL). But, as has been the case with PL for decades, its calls to "Shoot the Profit System Down" stood in flat contrast to its own rotten positions. For example, PL refuses to militarily defend the Iraqi and Palestinian populations against the U.S. imperialist behemoth and Zionist state repression, under the "logic" of denouncing both sides in the respective conflicts as equally reactionary.

When it mattered during the U.S. imperialist Cold War II onslaught of the 1980s, the Stalinist PL programmatically sided with its own bourgeoisie and refused to defend the remaining gains of the Russian Revolution, having long before proclaimed the Soviet Union "capitalist." PLers at the BSF were unable to explain what happened to the USSR in 1991-92, when counterrevolution opened the door to the return of capitalist misery to the homeland of October. Today, defense of China and the fight for proletarian political revolution there to oust its treacherous Stalinist bureaucratic misleaders is posed for all serious revolutionaries. But PL again puts itself on the same side as its imperialist masters by vituperating against "fascist" China. Meanwhile, PL has tried to cover its tracks by publishing an updated version of the old Stalinist hack job titled "Why Trotskyism Is Reactionary" in the Spring 2004 issue of its magazine *Communist*. (For more on Trotskyism vs. Stalinism, see the SYL pamphlet "The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited," 1985).

Young PLers also had a big problem dealing with PL's position on gay oppression, where it buys into the backward consciousness of bourgeois society. At one workshop, an SL comrade read a quote from their article "Lynching of Gay Student Reveals Two Sides of Rulers' Fascist Coin" (*Challenge*, 4 November 1998) that stated: "The torture-murder of Matthew Shepard, an openly homosexual Wyoming student, has thrown a spotlight on two apparently opposing movements—gaybashing and gay rights. Both movements are growing with the encouragement and support of conflicting sections of the U.S. capitalist class. And both movements are dangerous to the working class." PLers asserted their own individual support for gay rights, but none could show us where the line of that article was disavowed in print. Its bigoted position on gays, a betrayal of the liberating goals of communism, is derived from the Stalinist glorification of the family as a fighting unit for socialism.

At Sunday's ANSWER demonstration, Spartacist comrades took the lead in organizing opposition to an anti-gay provocateur who turned out to have fascist buddies (see "Anti-Abortion Bigot Driven Out; Fascist Provocation Spiked," above). Would PL see both the anti-gay provocateur and the outraged crowd who chanted, "Full democratic rights for gays!" as "two sides of the same fascist coin"? Using the incident that had just occurred, Spartacist comrades explained to the late-arriving PL contingent that, as Lenin taught us, real communists need to fight for the rights of *all* the oppressed.

New "Socialist" Parties, Same Reformist ANSWER

Aside from the drama with the provocateurs early on, the ANSWER rally to "Bring the Troops Home Now" proved to be an uneventful peace crawl of 2,000 dominated by signs proclaiming "Peace Is Patriotic." It was seen by many there as a venue at which to beg the Democrats to strike at least an antiwar *pose*. This timidity didn't stop the police from sweeping in and detaining one "Mid-Eastern looking" marcher, later released, for "looking around," sparking the crowd to chant, "This is racial profiling!" (Boston Indymedia, 25 July).

Protesters of all stripes, from liberals to anarchists, told us they'd be holding their nose and voting Kerry. Many told me they saw the last remaining difference between the Republicans and Democrats as a respect for civil liberties. But a Democratic city administration built the barbed-wire-enclosed "free speech zone" at the DNC, and a vast majority of Democrats in Congress voted for the Patriot Act. One woman organizing "swing state" campaigning said she opposed the Democrats, but went on to argue that if Bush was re-elected it might be the last election America has. Her view, shared by many liberals, was that civil liberties are rights "granted" by the capitalist state. In fact, civil liberties are won and defended in the course of social struggle.

Even as they organized liberals to beg the Democrats for peace, leading ANSWER organizers in the reformist Workers World Party (WWP) paid lip service to the ideas of socialism and workers' political independence, ideas belied by the WWP's constant courting of bourgeois politicians. Also in Boston was the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), a recent split from the WWP. PSLers told us they have no political differences with the WWP. The PSL's founding statement in *Socialism and Liberation Magazine* (August 2004), which we picked up there, argues:

> "Pacifist appeals to the ruling class for a 'peaceful' or 'kinder, gentler' foreign policy is the worst kind of deceit offered up by social democrats and opportunists. Working to elect a new leader to preside over the affairs of the warfare state will have zero impact in reducing the threat of war. As Lenin wrote in 1916, under the system of imperialism peace is merely a prelude to the next war."

This shows real chutzpah. The PSL is not only associated with ANSWER but also proudly hails ANSWER's work during the antiwar protests. The entire strategy of ANSWER in the antiwar movement (led by those now in both the WWP and the PSL) was to play a key role in maintaining and breeding illusions in the Democratic Party. While various reformists crowed over the "success" of the antiwar movement, many youth we spoke to were rather depressed by the realization that mass protests alone could not and did not stop the bipartisan drive to war against Iraq.

Black America Betrayed by Democratic Party Misleaders

On Monday, the Socialist Party (SP) held the only rally during the DNC actually *against* the Democrats. One of our comrades spoke at it, underlining our revolutionary integrationist program:

> "America is not and has not been the land of the free. It's built on exploitation, it's built on oppression, and structurally founded on the special oppression of black people at the bottom of society—from slavery to Jim Crow to what people call the 'Prison-Industrial Complex' today. And this city itself is built on racial oppression. This city is the city where busing was defeated in the streets."

Our comrade referred to the infamous 1976 attack on a black lawyer by flag-wielding racist white youths and continued that this is "the same American flag that the Democrats are rallying behind today and rallying under in their convention. The same American flag that Ralph Nader says he wants to cleanse."

The much-vaunted wave of "hip-hop activism" played out as crass commercial hustling at Russell Simmons' Hip-Hop Summit that same day. We were planning to attend until we discovered that getting in meant joining Simmons' "Hip-Hop Team Vote." Which is to say, for the privilege of hearing the penetrating social insights of Ma$e and the Ying Yang Twins and "special discounts on the latest new clothing, shoe wear & gear," we too could have signed on to line up earnest and political minority youth to be voting cattle for the Democrats. No thanks.

On Tuesday, speaking at the convention, Democratic Party politico Al Sharpton claimed that black voters, having failed to procure 40 acres and a mule from the Republicans following the Civil War, "decided we'd ride this donkey as far as it would take us." But that donkey's been walking all over black people for years. Black oppression, the bedrock of American capitalism, can only be eliminated through the victorious conquest of power by the U.S. proletariat. Just look at how mainstream Democrats treated even former FBI fink Sharpton for bringing up issues like racist cop murders in his presidential campaign and for going outside the script at the DNC (see "Al Sharpton: Political Hustler for Hire," *WV* No. 822, 19 March)! There will be no social revolution here without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard.

Bizarre Behavior

The nominally more militant and leftist Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), in a concession to "Anybody but Bush" sentiment, made a "commitment" to participate in protests against the Republican National Convention in New York, where they have one "collective," but not the DNC in Boston, where they have five (*Strike!*, June/July 2004). This left the "anti-authoritarian" organizing banner to the action-factionistas of the BI(A)ck Tea Society (BTS), who basked in the media limelight but delivered very little in the way of actual protest.

Throughout the week, we distributed our flier on how their one serious public

Abu-Jamal...

(continued from page 16)

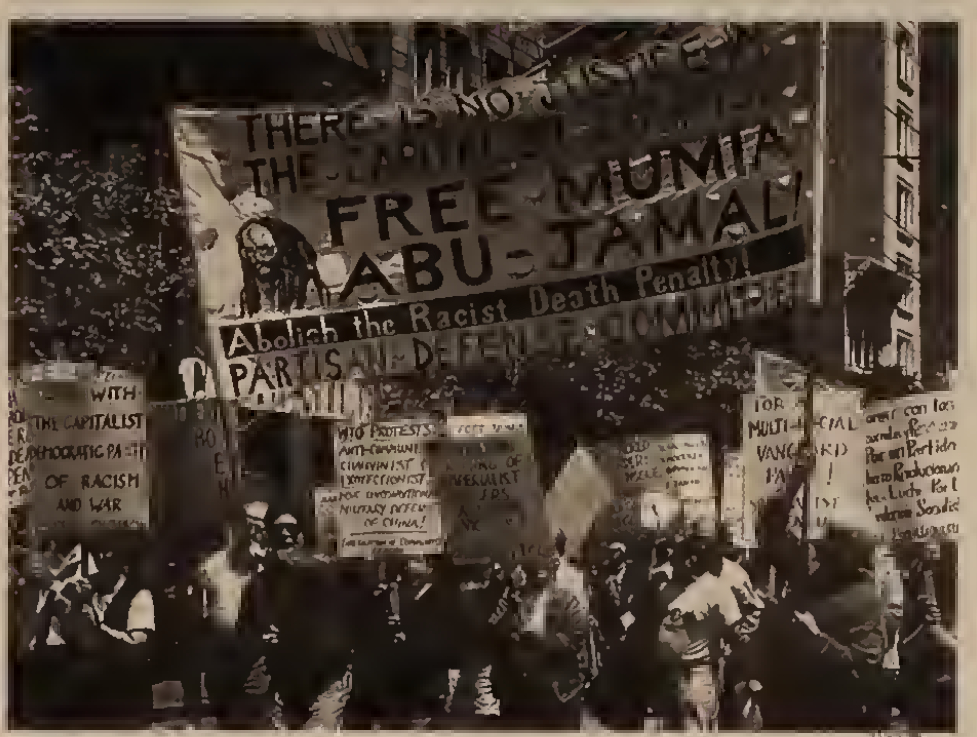
Pennsylvania state courts. But within days of the *Beard* decision, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals lifted the stay, ordering Jamal (and other Pennsylvania death row inmates) to file briefs on whether or not the *Beard* decision applies to his case. A legal memorandum submitted to the court by Robert Bryan, Jamal's lead attorney, points out that the *Beard* decision has no relevance to Jamal's case. The brief cites Judge Yohn's ruling: "Although *Mills*, handed down on June 6, 1988, was decided after petitioner was sentenced to death, it nonetheless antedated the finality of petitioner's conviction, which was registered on October 1, 1990, when the United States Supreme Court denied his petition for a writ of certiorari."

This is a clear statement of fact that the *Beard* case should have no effect on Jamal. But the entire history of Jamal's case shows that a fighter for black freedom like Mumia has no rights which the capitalist courts are bound to respect. An outspoken champion of the oppressed, Jamal was a target of the Philadelphia police and of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI from the time he was a Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15. For over 22, years Democratic and Republican prosecutors, governors and state and federal legislators have run the truth about this fighter for black freedom through a wringer of lies that would make even Bush and Cheney blush with pride. And for 22 years, court after court has ignored not only overwhelming evidence of Jamal's innocence but also the legal precedents and constitutional strictures demanding his freedom which purportedly guide them.

The D.A. in Jamal's case won a death sentence by assuring the jury the sentence was merely symbolic, that Jamal would never die because he would have "appeal after appeal after appeal." Although three years earlier the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that such language required automatic reversal, in 1989 they affirmed Jamal's death sentence. In 1991, tbe Supreme Court reversed the death sentence of David Dawson on the grounds that the prosecution improperly used his political affiliation as a member of the racist White Aryan Brotherhood to prejudice the jury. When Mumia sought a reversal on tbe grounds that the prosecution used his past membership in the Black Panther Party in securing the death sentence, the Supreme Court refused to even consider his case.

There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghettos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq, who demand an end to the anti-immigrant witchhunt and attacks on civil liberties in the name of the never-ending "war on terrorism."



WV Photo

San Francisco, May 2000: Revolutionary Contingent built by SL, SYC and Labor Black League called for mobilizing labor's social power in fight to free Mumia.

Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. Seeing in his fight for freedom a reflection of their own struggles against oppression and exploitation, trade unionists and fighters for the oppressed in countries spanning the globe have rallied to Jamal's ease.

After years of evasion, the NAACP finally adopted a resolution calling for a new trial for Jamal at its annual convention in July. Though support for the resolution was widespread, NAACP leaders did all they could to prevent it from coming to the floor: delegates who planned to present the motion were decertified and barred from the convention; a planned panel discussion on the death penalty at which Mumia's case would be raised was abruptly cancelled. Only when Pam Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and others threatened to picket the NAACP convention the same day Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry was to speak there did the NAACP tops relent and let the resolution be voted.

In reporting on the NAACP vote in a recent article (*CounterPunch*, 16 July) liberal journalist Dave Lindorff notes the erosion of public support for Jamal, claiming, "The throngs of people who used to come out to demand a new trial for Abu-Jamal have faded away as his case, over the past several years, was taken over by ideological lawyers and others who managed to convince Abu-Jamal to make his case a political attack on the entire legal system, instead of dealing with the key issues in his trial that offered the best chance to get him a new hearing."

The "key issues"—racist jury-rigging, suppression of evidence, prosecutorial terrorization of witnesses, overt racial and pro-prosecutorial bias of the trial judge, denial of Jamal's constitutional right to self-representation and so much more—precisely point to the whole racist capitalist "justice" system. And every one of these key issues has been turned down by every court—from the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas to the U.S. Supreme Court.

What has driven Jamal's supporters from the streets are illusions in the capitalist courts promoted by reformist protest organizers, like Workers World Party and Socialist Action. These illusions have been embodied in the subordination of the call to free Mumia to the demand for a "new trial," consciously geared to appeal to liberals like Lindorff and the NAACP, to whom the antics of Judge Sabo were an aberration rather than the regular workings of the capitalist courts. Why mobilize in the unions and streets if the courts can be relied on to ultimately do the right thing?

The courts, including the Supreme Court, together with the cops, military and prisons, are part of the capitalist state, an instrumentality for organized violence by one class, the capitalist rulers, against the working class and all those at the bottom of this society. From the time the Partisan Defense Committee took up Jamal's case in 1987, we have sought to ensure that every legal avenue was pursued to free him while fighting against illusions in the capitalist state. We have publicized Jamal's case, raised critically needed funds for his legal battles and fought particularly to mobilize the social power of the multiracial labor movement in his defense, including through labor-centered united-front protests demanding Mumia's freedom and the abolition of the racist death penalty. Through these and other means, we have brought his case to trade unions representing millions around the world.

Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the bourgeois state is not some "neutral" agency that serves society, but exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit. This fight is rooted in the struggle to make the multiracial proletariat conscious of its historic class interests in the fight against tbe entire capitalist system, particularly the understanding that in this country the struggle for black freedom is central to the struggle for the emancipation of labor itself. ***Mobilize labor/black power to fight for Mumia's freedom! Abolish the racist death penalty!*** ■

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event—the "Really, REALLY Democratic Bazaar"—wasn't all that democratic after all (see "Boston SL/SYC Statement: Protest Bl(A)ck Tea Society Anti-Communist Exclusion!", page 9). Responses to our threatened exclusion ranged from sympathy from those anarchists who take talk of autonomy, openness and respect seriously, to nasty redbaiting from more hardened BTS and NEFAC members alike.

The BTS case wasn't helped any when an article written by BTS supporter Brian Basgen in *Industrial Worker* (July/August 2004) not only glowingly reported on their "anti-authoritarian" attempt to join cop "picket lines" at the Fleet Center prior to the DNC, but went on to militancy-bait the cops, whining, "It had become clear that the cops were playing dress-up, not having a picket." Cops are not workers but the front line of the capitalist state, whose job is to enforce the bloody rule of the bosses, as brought home by the separate killings of a Latino and a black man by Boston police in late June. More attuned to this reality than these "anarchists," the cops, as reported in *IW*, expelled them from the "picket line" with the sendoff: "Thanks for coming, you are not wanted, now get the f[---] out of here."

Come Tuesday, we decided to assert our democratic rights and set up our table at the Bazaar. For roughly two hours, it was a day of sunshine, tolerable and sometimes talented folk and punk performances and serious political discussion. Then, a young woman with the BTS approached us to ask our aid in expelling a Kerry supporter from the Bazaar! The hapless Democrat was offering "Kerrycatures," where passers-by could get their portrait drawn next to the venerable imperialist pig. We refused, telling the BTS that the man was a liberal in a bazaar *full* of them and did not pose a physical threat as a fascist would. To try to win youth, minorities and workers to a revolutionary program, bourgeois politics should be exposed in open political debate.

Displaying both faith in the capitalist state and mindless legalism, one BTS member denounced the Kerry supporter to the Park Authority with the complaint that the man had no permit. The attempt by the BTS to censor this man was merely a cover for their own accommodation of the "Anybody but Bush" sentiment on more muted display throughout the Bazaar. Later that day, a BTS leader tried repeatedly to chalk smears against us on the sidewalk.

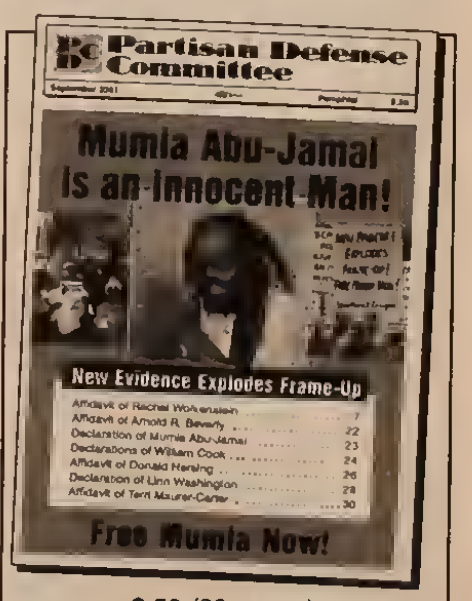
The initial BTS exclusion was a sharp expression of the undemocratic core of much "anti-authoritarian" ideology. Everything is "decentralized," "free" and "spontaneous" until anything controversial arises. Then—oops! You've just been "voluntarily disassociated"! What all of this translates into is a political movement based not on political debate among its constituents but on the personal whims and prejudices of its self-concealed leadership.

Not with a Bang

Not much came from the vaunted "day of action" on Thursday. If you read the papers closely, you migbt have noticed that an "affinity group" defaced some mannequins at a Gap store and another pulled off a brief banner-drop on the convention floor. Meanwhile, the main march was descended on by cops likely itching for some action after a quiet week, and three demonstrators were arrested over a so-called fake "Molotov cocktail" which was in reality a papier-mâché pirate hook. ***Drop the charges against all arrested protesters!***

It's one thing to describe the Democrats as the dead end of social struggle, but it was very different to see this graphically demonstrated over the course of the week. The much vaunted "decentralized" organizing of the anti-globalization protests only served to ensure a tacit unity over the politics of lesser-evil reformism, now cast into sharp relief by the impending election. Meanwhile, America's ruling parties stand ever more united in seeking to bolster U.S. imperial migbt. While discontent against the policies of America's rulers has drastically increased over the past few years, the situation cries out for a break with the bourgeois electoral framework and a fight for the political independence of the working class. As our speaker said at the SP rally:

> "We say we need a fighting workers party to take up the cause of the oppressed, to take up the cause of the labor movement. A party which does not say we want to administer this bloodsoaked capitalist state, but that we want to get rid of it. We want to tear it up! We want a different system, a socialist system. We want a revolutionary workers party!" ■



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Bush, Kerry...

(continued from page 1)

not developing nuclear arms, and there was ***not*** a link between Hussein and Osama bin Laden. As the *New York Times* (10 July) editorialized, "Put simply, the Bush administration's intelligence analysts cooked the books."

Why? The Senate committee politely evaded that question, postponing investigation of the uses the administration made of the CIA's disinformation until after the election. Veteran CIA director George Tenet, who also served under Clinton, resigned to take the heat off, while "groupthink" mentality at the CIA, rather than pressure from the White House, was blamed for the rush to justify the impending war. The Butler report in Britain used the exact same "groupthink" phrase to cover up for British prime minister Tony Blair's eager and slavish commitment of British troops to the U.S.'s Iraq war.

The war was launched to reassert U.S. imperialist domination over its rivals, and over the oil-rich Near East. Democrats overwhelmingly rallied to support the invasion at the time. From the get-go, and in fact, facts were irrelevant. One example: the bizarre tale of Iraq mobile biological weapons factories, from a source code-named "Curveball," was used by Secretary of State Colin Powell—reputedly the leading "moderate" in the Bush administration—at the United Nations in 2003. Responding to an analyst who questioned this fairy tale before the speech, the deputy director of the CIA's task force on "weapons of mass destruction" wrote: "Let's keep in mind the fact that this war's going to happen regardless of what Curveball said or didn't say, and the powers that be probably aren't terribly interested in whether Curveball knows what he's talking about" (cited in *CounterPunch*, 13 July). In short, the U.S. went to war, sending mainly working-class, black and Latino soldiers to slaughter thousands of Iraqis for a complete pack of lies.

But when CIA spies and blue-blooded representatives of the ruling class like the vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Democratic Senator John D. Rockefeller IV, question administration policy, you can be sure it's not in the interests of the working class. There are factional differences in bourgeois circles, especially as the occupation of Iraq isn't going well, as to how the U.S. can more ***effectively*** pursue American imperialism's interests—i.e., how to fatten their profit margins by increasing the exploitation and oppression of the world's peoples. Some bourgeois ideologues feel the Iraq adventure was a wasteful diversion from other U.S. strategic goals, like overturning the 1949 Chinese Revolution, or crushing North Korea. Then there are long-term interimperialist rivalries between the U.S. and its two strongest competitors, Japan and Germany. Now some liberals, including many black Democrats like Jesse Jackson Jr., call for a U.S. "intervention" into Sudan, using the horrible warfare in Darfur as an excuse to insert a heavy U.S. military presence in northern Africa. We say: U.S. hands off Sudan!

Whatever their differences, at bottom all bourgeois factions will unite against their perceived foreign and domestic opponents, most fundamentally the American working class, in defense of ***their*** state and its prerogatives. How many lies have both Democratic and Republican administrations told in advancing their imperial ambitions? Ask yourself, how many wars have there been? "Remember the Maine!" was the lying slogan launching America's first imperialist war against Spain in 1898, aimed at taking over Cuba and the Philippines. Democratic president Woodrow Wilson lied that World War I was to make the world "safe for democracy" when in fact it was a war to redivide up the spoils of the world. The U.S. entry into World War II, supposedly a war against fascism, was intended to establish American domination in Europe and East Asia. The Democratic Roosevelt administration provoked the Japanese to attack to justify an American declaration of war. In 1964, the Democratic Johnson administration fabricated the Gulf of Tonkin incident as a pretext to massively escalate the U.S.'s dirty colonial war against Vietnam's workers and peasants.

UPI

Friends of Afghanistan Society

Ronald Reagan hosted reactionary Afghan *mujahedin* in 1983 at White House. During Soviet intervention in 1980s, Afghan militiawomen took up arms against CIA-backed Islamic cutthroats.

Covering Up the CIA-Bin Laden Connection

On the warm and clear morning of September 11, 2001, a massive terrorist attack was unleashed over the American northeast, as four commercial airliners were seized and turned into mammoth flying bombs by Islamic fundamentalists, killing some 3,000 people. Two crashed into the World Trade Center, and today, a huge and achingly empty concrete pit is all that remains where the twin towers once stood in lower Manhattan. One plane was forced down by the crew and passengers in Pennsylvania, and one hit the Pentagon. Unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and being a military installation the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. That recognition does not make the attack an "anti-imperialist" act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon.

The next day we of the Spartacist League issued a statement denouncing the attack on the World Trade Center as an indefensible act of criminal terror, writing: "Those who perpetrated this horrific attack (and there is no evidence at all as to who that was) ***embrace the same mentality as the racist rulers of America—identifying the working masses with their capitalist exploiters and oppressors!***" We warned that the American ruling class would respond with repression at home and imperialist "retaliation" abroad.

The following month Congress passed the USA-Patriot Act with Kerry and most Democratic Senators and Congressmen voting for it. We wrote at the time: "These measures seek to eliminate many existing legal restraints on the government's power to spy on the population, imprison political activists or labor militants, and indiscriminately round up and detain non-citizens" (*WV* No. 767, 26 October 2001). At the same time, the U.S. invaded and occupied Afghanistan and, in 2003, Iraq. Thousands and thousands of victims of U.S. aggression are dead, dying, mutilated, tortured, imprisoned.

If the Bush administration had had its way, there would have been no 9/11 Commission, whose report was an overnight best seller. However, the families of those killed in the World Trade Center attack rightly wanted and demanded answers: Why had their loved ones perished? Could the government have prevented the terrorist attack? But in the 9/11 Commission Report they got a continued cover-up, because the bitter and horrible truth is that the fanatics whom the government charges with the attack, Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network, were in fact ***the creation of U.S. imperialism itself***. The report focuses on bin Laden's career ***after*** he turned on the U.S., claiming that earlier in Afghanistan "Bin Ladin and his comrades had their own sources of support and training, and they received little or no assistance from the United States."

But facts are facts. Even the *New York Times* (6 June) admits the connection, though coyly, noting the CIA's "clandestine role in the 1980's in evicting Soviet forces from Afghanistan—though that operation inadvertently laid the groundwork for the rise of Osama bin Laden." There was nothing inadvertent about it. In 1986, the CIA used Osama bin Laden to help build a huge tunnel complex in Khost, under the mountains near Pakistan, to create a major arms storage depot and training facility for the army of Islamic terrorists the CIA was building to fight the Soviet forces supporting the secular, modernizing nationalist government in Afghanistan (Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* [2001]). This was by far the biggest covert CIA operation ever. Tens of billions of dollars went to arm *mujahedin* fighters in Pakistan and to Pakistan's huge Inter Service Intelligence, which sponsored Islamic fundamentalist terror. After the Soviet Union was destroyed through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92, Washington cut off the lavish arms and money pipeline to its reactionary, woman-hating terrorists in Afghanistan. The blowback hit the World Trade Center a decade later.

There was nothing secret at the time about the massive U.S. support to the *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. Quite the contrary. Yet practically every self-styled leftist group in the world echoed the imperialist line. They condemned the Soviet intervention and demanded that Moscow withdraw its troops. Whatever the motives of the Kremlin leaders, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was doubly progressive. It represented a necessary military defense of the USSR—a bureaucratically degenerated workers state—against imperialist encirclement. And it represented a defense of the meager forces of social progress, centrally for women, in this hideously backward Central Asian country. Uniquely on the left, we raised the slogans: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!

Besides covering up the CIA-bin Laden connection, the 9/11 Commission Report proposes a truly outrageous set of "security" measures. You know it's bad when a right-wing columnist like former Nixon speechwriter William Safire (who is also something of a social libertarian) denounces "fear-driven new groupthink" and writes: "With great fanfare, the 9/11 commission amplified that call for a super-spymaster. This rush to 'reform' is stampeding otherwise sensible senators into writing a czarist bill to combine the spying techniques of secret surveillance with the law-enforcement power of the F.B.I., invading the unsuspected citizen's privacy under the ruhric of fighting terrorism" (*New York Times*, 26 July).

Among the Senate proposals are "biometric" identity cards not just for foreigners but for all Americans, abolishing restrictions against CIA and military spying and operations within the U.S., and establishing a single, unified intelligence/police/spying apparatus which can run unchecked at home and abroad. The report complains that airport security didn't use a list (called TIPOFF), which the State Department already had before the September 11 attacks, of some "known and suspected terrorists" which comprises 60,000 names! In the name of "pre-emptive" strikes, what's to stop the state from rounding up all those names, even if they haven't actually done anything? Actually, to qualify for "pre-emptive" detention, by definition you'd ***have*** to be innocent to be grabbed ***in advance*** of doing anything. This is no paranoid sci-fi Philip K. Dick fantasy, but the mindset of the American imperial police today.

For Class Struggle at Home!

When Kerry says he'd be a better commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces than Bush, he means better for the men (and a few women) who run Wall Street and the Fortune 500. Historically, the Democrats have been the preferred war party of American imperialism because of their broader base of support among workers, black people and ethnic minorities. Precisely because the Democrats are seen as a "friend" of labor and blacks, they can be a more effective political instrument for carrying out the bloody-handed crimes of American imperialism. The key to defeating the U.S. occupation of Iraq is class struggle at home, but this is impeded by the Democratic Party-loyal labor leadership, who are opposed to militant struggle that could break the chains tying workers to their exploiters in the ruling class.

For all the bourgeoisie's bombast about stopping terrorism, in fact the ***only*** people who actually stopped terrorists on September 11, 2001, were the heroic passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93. They voted to rush the cockpit, diverting the plane from its suicide bombing run and forcing it to crash into a field in Pennsylvania, killing all aboard. There were other heroes, overwhelmingly working men and women. The firefighters at the World Trade Center gave up hundreds of their own lives to save thousands. And the air traffic controllers across the country performed brilliantly on a nationwide coordinated scale, bringing 4,500 commercial and general aviation aircraft safely onto the ground without incident. Ronald Reagan and ***his*** class fired the whole PATCO air traffic controllers union in the 1980s, expressing their utter contempt for working people.

If there is to be an end to this system of imperialist war, racist oppression and all-sided grinding misery, the multiracial U.S. working class must be won, through Marxist education and its own experience in struggle, to the perspective of building a workers party that fights for a socialist revolution. The capitalist system must be overturned and replaced by the rule of the working class, a workers government that will seize the means of production and establish a planned, collectivized economy as part of an egalitarian, socialist society on an international scale. ■

India...

(continued from page 3)

wooed the "three Bills" (Gates, Clinton, dollar). He prided himself as the "architect of the high-tech revolution" that has made Andhra a leading exporter of software. He renamed a portion of the capital city Hyderabad "Cyherabad" and gave a Rs. [rupees] 20,000 government subsidy to foreign investors for each job created there. He set up a 9000-acre, duty-free commercial enclave called Andhra Pradesh Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) modeled on Shenzhen City in China. When Clinton came to Hyderabad in March 2000, spending a total of five hours there, the jails brimmed with beggars and street vendors rounded up for the duration of his visit. Naidu cleared the streets of stalls, pushcarts, and rickshaws, and had thirty grand old trees from different parts of the city chopped down and propped up along the route to be taken by Clinton's convoy from Air Force One.

The early news of Naidu's defeat in the recent elections was the first shock for the BJP, whose coalition government relied on the support of regional parties like Naidu's TDP (Telugu Desam Party) and Jayalalitha's AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) in Tamilnadu. The extravagantly corrupt Jayalalitha was notorious for policies leading to the immiseration of small peasants, driving them to mass suicides. In addition, she was known for putting in place anti-conversion laws designed to prevent untouchables and tribals from leaving Hinduism. Jayalalitha topped her own notoriety with her use of the BJP's PoTO (Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance), India's equivalent of the Patriot Act, and her own TESMA (Tamilnadu Essential Services Maintenance Act). When 1.1 million government employees went on strike in June last year, her government, armed with PoTO and TESMA, did something unprecedented in the history of India. It summarily dismissed 200,000 strikers and arrested 2200. Midnight arrests and police raids on union offices and houses of striking workers continued for days. Now Jayalalitha is gone too.

Last week's elections results were a startling demonstration of the backlash among Indian workers and poor peasants to India's so-called economic reforms. Publicly owned industries, or PSUs (Public Sector Units), in steel, electricity, petrochemicals, communications, railways, and the like are in the process of being sold off. Government-run healthcare and education has been cut. There are no more subsidies for small farmers, seeds are more and more expensive, and electricity for irrigation is unavailable. Naidu admitted his agenda was to make it so impossible for small farmers that they would voluntarily leave their land and go away, paving the way for big agribusiness. Since the beginning of reforms 2 million peasants have been displaced and in recent years it's been common to hear of whole peasant families drinking poison or hanging themselves from trees after they lose their land—in part due to their own feudal, uppercaste pride of land ownership which prevents them from thinking of seeking any other means of living.

The victory of Congress has been welcomed with great enthusiasm and its leader Sonia Gandhi is seen as a savior of peasants, workers, and minorities. Congress says it wants to put a "human face" on the economic reforms and it immediately promised free electricity to peasants. Novelist and activist Arundhati Roy (currently a favorite among American left-liberals) spoke for many on the Indian left when, in an article titled "Let Us Hope the Darkness Has Passed," she wrote, "For many of us who feel estranged from mainstream politics, there are rare, ephemeral moments of celebration. Today is one of them" (*Guardian*, May 14, 2004).

AFP

India, 2002: After train carrying Hindu fundamentalists was criminally torched by Muslim fanatics, Hindu mobs burned down homes in the state of Gujarat, killing hundreds in anti-Muslim pogroms.

But Congress, as its history shows, is no alternative. Though not as openly chauvinist as the BJP, Congress has always served the interests of the Hindu majority. Ever since Independence the party has been led by the despicable dynasty of the high Brahmin Nehru-Gandhi family. M. K. Gandhi (no relation to Indira and Rajiv, who descend from Nehru) was recorded by Mahadev Desai as saying that his opposition to separate electorates for the hideously oppressed untouchables was based on the fear that "'[u]ntouchable' hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste-Hindus" (cited in *From Untouchable to Dalit*, Eleanor Zelliot, page 167). In no small measure Gandhi and the Congress were responsible for the bloodbath following the India-Pakistan partition. Before the BJP, it was Congress who used communal tensions to divide and rule, leading to frequent pogroms against Muslims. During the Congress regime in Andhra, there was not a single year without communal riots in Hyderabad. Congress has been praised for putting forward a Sikh prime minister, but it was Indira's Congress who ordered Operation Blue Star in which 600 Sikhs were killed inside the Golden Temple, and 3000 more were massacred after Indira was assassinated, in retaliation, by her own Sikh bodyguards. In Kashmir the BJP is only carrying on the policy established by Congress. In Sri Lanka Rajiv Gandhi's IPKF (Indian Peace Keeping Force) was so notorious for its atrocities against ethnic Tamils that it led to his getting blown into very small pieces by a suicide bomber. When it comes to political repression, one has only to remember the dark days of the Emergency in the mid-1970s. In 1985 Congress introduced the TADA (Terrorist and Disruptive Activities) Act, which allowed the police to arrest and detain a person without charge merely for suspicion of having knowledge of an alleged terrorist group. These suspects were usually killed in "encounters" with police, making the act essentially a license to kill. Sonia's right-hand man and new PM Manmohan Singh is known as the architect of the economic reforms that Congress is now promising the national and international bourgeoisie to continue (but with a human face).

Congress now has to depend, as did the BJP, on other parties to form a coalition government. Their biggest allies are the Stalinists—the CPI-M (Communist Party of India-Marxist), who are now the third-largest parliamentary party, and the CPI (Communist Party of India).

Historically, the Stalinists in India supported sending Indian troops to fight for Britain during World War Two in the "anti-fascist people's war," and before 1947 they rallied workers and poor peasants behind the bourgeois Congress party, calling it an "anti-feudal, anti-imperialist, nationalist" formation. Immediately after Independence, major peasant revolts broke out against the zamindars (a class of feudal lords created by the British to collect taxes for the raj) and princely states in Andhra, West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura. Even though these heroic struggles mobilized poor peasants and other oppressed sections in the countryside, including Muslims, untouchables, and tribals, their Stalinist leaders all came from uppercaste rich and middle peasantry and served the interests of that class. The popularity of these revolts eventually allowed the Stalinists to form bourgeois state governments in all those states except Andhra.

In these three strongholds they introduced limited land reforms, suppressed communalism, and expanded free education—in Kerala, as a result, there is now almost 100 percent literacy. In other states and in the center, the Stalinists supported whichever bourgeois party appeared to be the lesser evil at the moment. In Andhra, for example, the same Stalinists now supporting Congress had previously supported Naidu's TDP—whose leadership has a social composition very similar to their own—against Congress. Their own leader Pucchalapalli Sundarayya admitted at that time that he couldn't tell his own party's publication *Prajasakthi* (People's Power) from TDP propaganda. There is a widespread hatred among workers for the leaders of the CPI-M-affiliated CITU (Center for Indian Trade Unions), which not infrequently boils over into physical reprisals. In 2001, 200 Dunlop tire factory workers and their families, feeling betrayed when the factory closed and their long-due wages were withheld, attacked the president of the Dunlop unit of CITU and beat him up.

Although the Stalinists have made some noises that their support of Congress will be conditional on its stopping disinvestment in the public sector, their opposition to liberalization is fast dwindling in the heat. The CPI-M declared that they "welcome foreign investment and realize that no country could quarantine itself from globalization" (*Daily Times*, May 21, 2004). Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, the CM [Chief Minister] of West Bengal's CPI-M government, is openly promising foreign investors (with a portrait of Lenin hanging behind him) that he will cut regulations, rein in labor unions, rid Calcutta of the plague of constant strikes, and shut down "sick" state-run industries. Even before the drafting of the common minimum program for the new coalition, the CPI-M party spokesman announced that partial disinvestment "could be discussed" (*Outlook India*, May 15). The common minimum program itself calls for encouraging foreign investment, slowing down—not stopping—privatization, and deeper ties with the United States.

At most, these Stalinists want a return to pre-BJP times. But what India needs is a socialist revolution. To make one it will take a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party that will organize workers across communal, national, and caste lines—rallying the poor peasants behind them—and link their struggle to those of workers in the imperialist countries.

Comradely greetings,
Sarah

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

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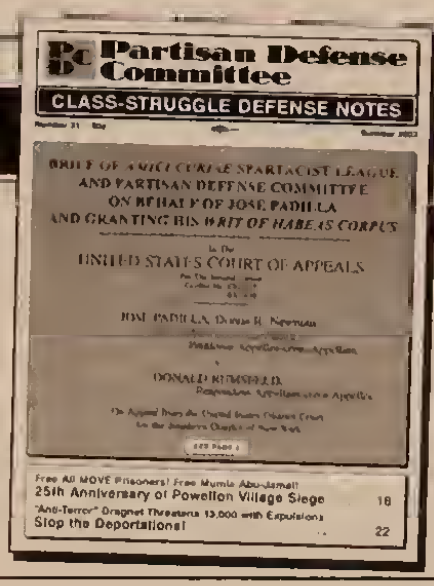


The USec and Solidarność

1 July 2004

Dear editor,

I appreciated your article on Hong Kong published in *Workers Vanguard* No. 825 (30 April). You point out the fake Trotskyists' support to counterrevolutionary mobilizations in Hong Kong under the motto of "self-determination" and "democracy." You then proceed to say: "This is not surprising given that these groups, *October Review* and Pioneer, are supporters of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat, which hailed Polish Solidarność, the company union of Wall Street and the Vatican, as it led the first of the capitalist counterrevolutions in East Europe."

What are you talking about here, 1981 or 1989? This is important because the pseudo Trotskyists sometimes pretend they were correct to support Solidarność in the beginning (1981), when according to them Solidarność was still a bonafide workers organization fighting against Stalinist "totalitarianism," but which degenerated some time in the mid '80s, after which the fake Trotskyists stopped supporting them (1989). They try thus to wash their hands of their responsibility in supporting this motor force for counterrevolution in Poland.

The United Secretariat (USec) certainly hailed Solidarność in 1981, as it ***attempted*** to lead the first of the capitalist counterrevolutions in East Europe (the Stalinists effectively spiked the counterrevolutionary coup, although they could only arrest the situation, not address its causes). However, by the time Solidarność ***did*** lead the counterrevolution in Poland, i.e, in 1989, the USec was far less vocal in their support to Solidarność. Indeed, a *WV* No. 479 (9 June 1989) article says that they had by that time found out a new "vanguard," the PPS-RD. The PPS-RD, whose founding declaration stated they stood closer to Pope Wojtyla's "social teachings" than to Marxism, was in a bloc with the arch-anticommunist Pilsudskiite KPN and Fighting Solidarność to oppose the round-table agreements between the Stalinists and Solidarność. As *Workers Vanguard* noted, "Moczulski's KPN stands ***to the right*** of Walesa, Kuron & Co. [historic Solidarność leaders], while 'Fighting Solidarność' shares Walesa's program for 'free market' capitalist exploitation in Poland." So much for the USec's occasional claims that they did not support Solidarność's counterrevolution in 1989.

Comradely,
A.H.

Iraq and Left...

(continued from page 16)

U.S. imperialism. Every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world.

But we do not imbue the forces presently organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces with "anti-imperialist" credentials and warn that in the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism. We are intransigent opponents of the murderous communal violence against other ethnic, religious and national populations oftentimes carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies. And we condemn the kidnappings and executions of foreign civilian workers in Iraq.

We are external to the situation inside Iraq and our task at this point in time is therefore necessarily largely propagandistic, but no less crucial. While making clear that the main enemy is U.S. imperialism, a revolutionary party with roots and influence in Iraq today would mobilize against the reimposition of *sharia*, against communalist sectarian attacks, for organizing the vestiges of the workers movement and the legions of the unemployed on a class basis through strikes and workplace occupations against the thieving imperialist occupiers and parasitic clerics.

Equitable resolution of the democratic rights of all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, cannot be achieved under capitalism but only with the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. This means combining the struggle against the occupation with a struggle against all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism, and poses the urgent need to forge Marxist parties to lead the struggles for the working people to come to power throughout the region. International extension of the revolution to the rich centers of imperialism—the United States, Germany, Japan —is vital, or, as Marx noted, "all the old crap" will return.

Revolutionaries vs. Reformists in the Antiwar Movement

We oppose calls to cloak an American imperialist occupation in "humanitarian" United Nations garb. We oppose the liberals and ostensible leftists who argue that the way out of the Iraq occupation is "regime change" in Washington in November. The rape of Iraq was prepared by 14 years of crippling United Nations sanctions and thousands of murderous bombing sorties ordered by Democratic president Clinton. John Kerry aims to reclaim the White House for the Democrats this fall by outflanking Bush as a war candidate. A solution to the suffering of the peoples in Iraq depends heavily on *class struggle at home against U.S. imperialism*. We fight to instill in the American proletariat the consciousness that the same profit-lusting rulers who smash their unions, drive down wages, destroy health care and education, massacre the workers of Iraq in the interest of capital. This requires a tenacious struggle to swim against the tide of reactionary "national unity" which has been cynically whipped up and manipulated by the Bush gang, the Democrats and the AFL-CIO labor tops since September 11, 2001.

This is the perspective that the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs fought for in the Iraq antiwar movement against the reformist pressure politics of United for Peace and Justice, Workers World Party (WWP)—which recently underwent a split—and its ANSWER coalition, the Revolutionary Communist Party and its Not In Our Name coalition, and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and its various campus coalitions.

While occasionally spouting home truths about the nature of the profit-driven capitalist system and its inherent drive to war in the pages of their newspapers, these groups actively limited antiwar protests to the confines of the Democratic Party and built the rallies as platforms for the Democrats. Sure, they featured more left-talking Democrats like Jesse Jackson Sr., Al Sharpton and Barbara Lee rather than John Kerry or Edwards. But these politicians merely cover the left flank of the same party of capitalist class rule. Thus, while we forthrightly raised the call to defend Iraq—i.e., that workers and antiwar activists had to take a side against the U.S.—the antiwar coalitions refused to raise such calls, limiting their slogans to pacifist demands like "No to War" or "Stop the War," pandering to the "peace is patriotic" Democratic Party politicians.

Today, these same reformist groups espouse a seemingly more left-wing posture of cheering resistance to the occupation. A 5 February *Workers World* article headlines, "Mass Resistance Hinders Neocolonial Plans," while a 22 July article enthuses, "The Iraqi resistance is so large and has so much popular support among nationalist Iraqis angered by the presence of U.S. troops that it cannot be defeated militarily." Under the headline, "The Right to Resist—Why You Should Support the Opposition to the U.S. Occupation of Iraq" (*Socialist Worker*, 2 July), the ISO writes, "If the Iraqi resistance drives the U.S. out of Iraq, it would be a major setback for Bush's agenda and the agenda of U.S. imperialism. This would be a tremendous victory for our side—making it much more difficult for the U.S. to choose a new target in the Middle East or elsewhere in trying to impose its will." If the U.S. were driven out of Iraq, this would certainly be a victory.

But why is it that groups that refused to side with Iraq in the lead-up to and during the war now cheer on acts of resistance against the occupation? Because every blow against the U.S. in Iraq redounds against Bush in the run-up to the November election and plays to the Democrats' advantage. While the ISO and WWP write articles denouncing the Democrats, and in the case of WWP are running their own candidates for the presidential election, in practice they work for candidates whose purpose is to refurbish the tarnished image of the Democratic Party. Thus a 22 July editorial in *Workers World* endorses the campaign of black Atlanta Democrat Cynthia McKinney, calling her "Unbossed & Unbought." As for the ISO, they're torn over whether to support capitalist politician Ralph Nader, as they did in 2000, despite the fact that he has made it clear that the purpose of his campaign is to push the Democratic Party in a more "progressive" direction.

You can't raise political consciousness and struggle against war while subordinated to representatives of the capitalist class waging the war! Coalitions based on this kind of class collaboration are an obstacle because they shackle antiwar workers and youth to their class enemy and promote the illusion that the priorities of the American ruling class can be shifted in the interest of working people through peace crawls. The truth is that imperialist war is not merely a policy, but the inexorable product of the drive to conquer new markets for exploitation and export of capital. That's why only a series of socialist revolutions to overthrow capitalist rule can create a world planned economy that will put a stop to imperialist war. This is the only solution, and to achieve it requires a fight for the political independence of the workers movement and the forging of a workers party. Break with the Democrats!

WV Photos

Left: Workers World Party's ANSWER coalition at 30 March 2003 protest in L.A. promotes pro-imperialist lie that American occupation forces are "our troops." Right: Al Sharpton speaking at 26 October 2002 antiwar rally. ANSWER built platforms for capitalist politicians during antiwar movement, serving to bolster illusions in Democratic Party.

Frankenstein's Monster, the Antiwar Movement and the "Resistance"

The imperialist war against and occupation of Iraq are a direct consequence of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. Although bureaucratically deformed and degenerated by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union was still a workers state with a planned economy and collectivized property, if not the beacon of liberation created by the October 1917 socialist revolution. We fought to defend the Soviet Union—just as we do China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba today—against any external attack by imperialism, without any a priori conditions, and against internal attempts at capitalist restoration. At the same time, we fight to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies and to implant the revolutionary internationalist and socialist program of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, as we did in the former USSR, East Germany and elsewhere. Without the Soviet Union to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism, the world has become a more dangerous place of unbridled American military intervention and increased rivalries among capitalist powers, which threaten wider conflicts, perhaps, and surely, ultimately including with nuclear weapons.

From the beginning of the Cold War, U.S. policy under Democrats and Republicans was to bolster Islamic fundamentalism and murderous, authoritarian regimes (like Hussein in Iraq and the Shah in Iran) as bulwarks against "godless communism" in the region and to ensure access to petroleum reserves. In 1979, the Soviet Red Army intervened in Afghanistan at the request of the modernizing bourgeois-nationalist government which was besieged by Islamic fundamentalists opposed to elementary democratic rights for women and reforms that infringed on the economic and political fiefdoms of the mullahs. These *mujahedin* cutthroats threw acid in the faces of unveiled women and skinned Communist schoolteachers alive for the "crime" of teaching women how to read. They were armed, financed and trained by U.S. imperialism. We Trotskyists hailed the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan and called to extend the gains of the Russian Revolution to the Afghan peoples. But the Kremlin criminally withdrew the Red Army from Afghanistan in an effort to appease U.S. imperialism. This marked the beginning of the end for the Soviet Union, as religious reaction and nationalism fueled anti-Communist rollback across East Europe and to the homeland of the October Revolution.

An informative article by Juan Cole, "The Iraqi Shiites—On the History of America's Would-Be Allies" (*Boston Review*, October-November 2003), notes, "Once the Soviets had fallen the Sunni radicals abandoned their alliance of convenience with Washington and turned against the United States, which they now saw as a bulwark of the secular governments that they were trying to overthrow, in addition to resenting its role in supporting Israeli expansionism. The more radical of these groups coalesced into al Qaeda and decided to hit the 'far' enemy rather than only the 'near' one."

This history is essential in evaluating the American left and the Iraq occupation today. Claiming a "third camp" of neither Washington nor Moscow, the ISO sided with their "own" bourgeoisie by serving as the left cover for "democratic" imperialism against the Soviet Union in every conflict of the Cold War. The ISO's *Socialist Worker* (May 1988) cheered: "We welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in East Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin's heirs." With galloping cynicism, groups like the ISO, which howled against "Soviet imperialism" in Afghanistan and supported the counterrevolutionary *jihad*, now oppose the Iraq war they helped bring about in their own small way through their craven anti-Communism.

The Myth of the "National Resistance"

Cheerleaders for Third World nationalism, Saddam Hussein and the Ba'athist Party, WWP peddles the myth of an "Iraqi revolution" which they cite as a continuous process since 1958! A 5 February article by Fred Goldstein states, "The invasion to recolonize Iraq is a new development in the history of imperialism. It is an attempt to destroy the independence of a people who have already carried out a great anti-imperialist revolution—the revolution of 1958." Later in the article, Goldstein informs us, "In Iraq, because of the nature of the Iraqi Revolution and what it achieved for the masses, there was no such counterrevolutionary internal base for the CIA and Pentagon to work with."

This is an outright lie. Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath Party were the counterrevolutionary oppressors of Iraq's workers, Kurds, Shi'ites and other peoples, and as such were close allies of U.S. imperialism until Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. In 1958, there was indeed a revolutionary upheaval that overthrew the pro-British monarchy. There was also a mass Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) that united Kurds and Arabs as well as Sunnis, Shi'ites, Jews and Christians. It was a party with good human material but a rotten Stalinist program of class collaboration. The events of 1958 did not end in victory, but a defeat from which the working class has yet to recover, because the opportunity for socialist revolution was sacrificed by the Kremlin Stalinists and the ICP on the altar of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism and alliance with a mythical "progressive" bourgeoisie in Iraq. When the Ba'athists took power in the 1960s, they, in cahoots with the CIA, outlawed and shattered the ICP, killing and imprisoning thousands of Communists and trade unionists.

To understand what is happening in Iraq today, including the communalist

Oakland: Black Union Militant Fired

27 July 2004

To the Editor:

I and other members of AFSCME Locals 444 and 2019 in Oakland, California greatly appreciated your coverage of our joint rally last September 17 to defend Charles DuBois, a black Local 444 member fired using the pretext of bogus "workplace violence" policies last year by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (or EBMUD) after 18 years as a union activist. The company moved to fire him after it succeeded in splitting the unions during contract negotiations, enabling the company to get increased worker contributions for pensions and health care and increased speedup. His firing was an attempt to intimidate all union members. The recent article I read in *Workers Vanguard* on the "workplace violence" witchhunting of Carlos Blackman, a black union shop chairman in New York City Transit, makes clear how these union-busting policies are being used nationally.

Many members of both our locals—the two main unions at EBMUD—took up brother DuBois' defense because we understood that by defending brother DuBois we were at the same time defending the rights of our unions as a whole. The two unions jointly organized the rally of over 100 union members and supporters outside company headquarters in downtown Oakland demanding: "Defend Union Rights! Defend Charles DuBois! An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!" This was the first time the two locals had joined in such an independent action, for once not aimed at pressuring the politicians on EBMUD's Board of Directors. I thought your readers would be interested in what has happened with this case. I am attaching an article I wrote which was published in the June 22 issue of Local 444's newsletter, *Mainline*.

Gregg Best

* * *

Arbitrator Rules Against DuBois

On Thursday May 20, the so-called neutral arbitrator handed down a "binding" ruling against Charles DuBois, upholding every one of EBMUD's frame-up allegations and actions taken against him (except one minor issue). Arbitrators overwhelmingly rule in favor of management. This ruling against Charles is an attack on our ability to defend our union and ourselves.

This is a bitter and infuriating outcome of the long struggle by members of both Local 444 and our sister Local 2019 to defend Charles DuBois and defend our unions. His case and the issues it raised resonated broadly with the members of both locals, fed up with management's unchecked abuse and speedup. As most members probably know, I was one of the members of the joint union committee to defend brother DuBois along with the president of 2019, three 444 Executive Board members and about a half dozen members from both locals who were the hard core that began the fight to defend Charles last summer. This committee was crucial in organizing the joint union rally last September 17th in his defense, as well as organizing members to come to Charles' Board of Adjustment and arbitration hearings. So I want to take up what I believe are the two main reasons that enabled management to fire Charles, namely, the "Workplace Violence" policy and the question of binding arbitration.

To my knowledge, Charles is the second member of Local 444 to be framed up and fired by EBMUD using the anti-union "Workplace Violence" rules. The first was Randy Kim, a well-liked, high seniority, Asian American member and ex-officer of Local 444 who was fired in 1998. Randy was subject to outrageous charges, a police invasion of his home, and branded as "violent." The defense of Randy was undermined by the leadership's support for the "Workplace Violence" clause, allowing management to target other members.

For union-hating management, Charles had three strikes against him. First of all he is black. He is also an outspoken union militant, former steward and union officer. And he has always been an opponent of all instances of injustice against working people—like the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal—that he thought the membership needed to know about. Black and other minority workers in particular aren't supposed to be outspoken. We have to get rid of this "Workplace Violence" policy, which is an all-purpose weapon used by EBMUD management and across the country to target any union member management doesn't like, especially union militants and minority workers.

The second reason Charles (and Randy Kim) were fired is because the labor leadership, from the AFL-CIO bureaucrats on down, have voluntarily *given away* the contractual right to strike over grievances! Instead every union contract that I know of now has a truncated grievance procedure topped off with binding arbitration. The union leaderships think this is the only way to "bind" management. In reality it is the unions that have been bound. Binding arbitration deliberately takes a grievance out of the hands of the union membership. It demobilizes the union.

The strike is the main weapon that a union has to defend itself and fight for what it wants against management, here or anywhere. There is no law that guarantees workers the right to strike. It has to be constantly fought for. If it weren't for the determination of so many union members, ***none*** of the actions we engaged in to defend Charles would have happened. We cannot rely on binding arbitration. It gives up the independence of the union. Neither arbitrators nor the government are neutral. We must have the ability to mobilize the memberships of both locals in joint action to defend the union and its members. The September 17th joint rally was a step in that direction and cut across EBMUD's divide and rule strategy that resulted in last year's contract debacle. Despite this setback of Charles's firing, joint union action must become the rule until we have one local.

Oakland, California

Iraqi women protest last January against decision by Washington's hand-picked Governing Council to replace Hussein-era civil codes protecting women with Islamic *sharia* law.

violence, you have to understand what Iraq is. Iraq is not a nation, but a patchwork of different peoples and ethnicities carved up by the British imperialists out of the old Turkish Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. There are three main populations within Iraq's borders: a portion of the Kurdish nation (a nation that also spans parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria); an Arab Shi'ite majority; and the historically dominant Arab Sunni minority. Absent the working class emerging as an independent political force in a struggle against neocolonial rule, each of these populations can only come to power by oppressing the others and in alliance with U.S. imperialism. What "resistance forces" like Moktada al-Sadr's Shi'ite Mahdi Army are after is to rule Iraq as the local satraps for imperialism if the U.S. forces would just get out.

The struggle of the Kurdish people explodes the myth of a unitary Iraqi nation. Their fight for self-determination is a just struggle, requiring the overthrow of four capitalist states. We call for a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan! But in Iraq today—and only in Iraq—the Kurdish question has become decisively subordinated to the occupation, in the sense that the Kurdish political parties and their military forces are an integral part of the occupation forces. In fact, many Iraqi Kurds mistakenly look with favor on the American occupation as a guarantor against Arab reconquest. The struggle for Kurdish independence can only go forward through intransigent opposition to the occupation and the Kurdish nationalists who collaborate with U.S. imperialism.

The so-called "national resistance" in Iraq is a myth promoted by U.S. and Western imperialism and cynical leftists. When the American military bombed the Sunni town of Falluja and simultaneously went after Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr, there were temporary instances of unity against the foreign occupier. But resistance forces led by religious clerics are by definition sectarian. There isn't a unitary "resistance" force in Iraq but rather disparate groupings organizing guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces—and often against rival groupings and random civilians. In the present context, an award for the most asinine analysis should go to Nat Weinstein's *Socialist Viewpoint* (a split from Socialist Action) whose front page in April cheered, "Iraq: The People United Can Never Be Defeated."

Defeat U.S. Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!

The flip side of the reformist left's pandering to liberal Democrats is the dim and pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric of Jan Norden's tiny "Internationalist Group." (For an exposé of their three-card-monte organization, see "IG's Potemkin Village Idiocy *Ad Absurdum*," *WV* No. 828, 11 June.) The IG ludicrously denounces *Workers Vanguard* for demanding "U.S. Troops Out of Iraq, Now!" (see the IG's "Sink U.S. Imperialism in the Quicksands of the Near East!", *Internationalist*, November 2003). Falsely claiming that our demand for the withdrawal of U.S. troops is addressed to the American rulers and not the workers movement, the IG thunders, "***The imperialists must be driven out of Afghanistan and Iraq. The Zionists must be driven out of the West Bank and Gaza***" (emphasis in original). What kind of idiots *oppose* the demand for the immediate withdrawal of imperialist troops? Answer: fraudulent "Marxists" who despair of mobilizing the American proletariat against the capitalist ruling class.

Norden's group equates our slogans—"Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All U.S. troops out now!"—with the reformist American Socialist Workers Party's "Out Now" slogan during the Vietnam War, which was designed to appeal to bourgeois politicians who wanted to cut U.S. imperialism's losses and get out of Vietnam. Actually, our position is consistent with the Spartacist revolutionary history on which Norden falsely claims to stand. We refer readers to *Spartacist* No. 5 (November-December 1965), which reprints the press release "Spartacist Breaks with New York Parade Committee" wherein we state:

> "The slogan 'Stop the War in Vietnam Now' can mean many things to many people. But given the composition of this Committee, the fact that it is dominated by right-wing pacifists and 'liberals,' i.e. pro-capitalist and pro-LBJ, it is clear that the slogan is deliberately ambiguous in order to avoid facing the duty to advance the only demand that has any meaning: *'For the Immediate, Unconditional Withdrawal of All U.S. Troops from Vietnam!'*" (emphasis added)

The IG's polemics against us boil down to this: they say they're for the military defeat of the imperialists and lie that we are not. Always prone to impressionism and adventurism, and willing to fight to the last drop of someone else's blood, Norden & Co. substitute fantasies of revolutionary conflagrations sweeping aside imperialism in the Near East today in the absence of the struggle to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class, glorifying social forces hostile to the proletariat. During the first Gulf War in 1991, as editor of *Workers Vanguard*, Norden made crazed projections of Hussein's army inflicting serious damage to the U.S. military. When Norden broke from Trotskyism, one British comrade aptly asked, "Would it have been a capitulation to 'smoke and mirrors' imperialist propaganda to wake the workers of the world to the revolutionary defence of Iraq, to halt, derail, smash by class-struggle means the crushing one-sided slaughter being *prepared* before our disbelieving eyes?"

In short, occasional phrases to the contrary notwithstanding, the IG has no perspective of fighting to mobilize the proletariat in the U.S. and other imperialist centers to wage class struggle against imperialist war. Indeed, during the Afghanistan war in 2001, the IG explicitly denounced our slogan "For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!"—a slogan raised in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks and the government's reactionary "national unity" drive—writing, "The emphasis on 'at home' is counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists *abroad*" (*Internationalist*, Fall 2001).

Military defeats abroad help sharpen the class contradictions of a particular country. That's the meaning of the Marxist axiom that "war is the mother of revolution." But it is fundamentally the working class that has the social power to accomplish this historic task. We do not raise the call for class struggle at home with the pollyannish belief that the Iraq occupation is going to end with the immediate unfolding of socialist revolution in the U.S. We raise it in order to cut through the reactionary "national unity" mongering and "anti-terror" scare of the ruling class and to bring the working class to the understanding that it alone has the power to defeat the American imperialist system through proletarian socialist revolution. Out of working-class and social struggle and through the intervention of revolutionary Marxists, the workers party essential for this successful outcome will be forged. This is the purpose to which the Spartacist League is dedicated.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Left and the "Iraqi Resistance"

U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

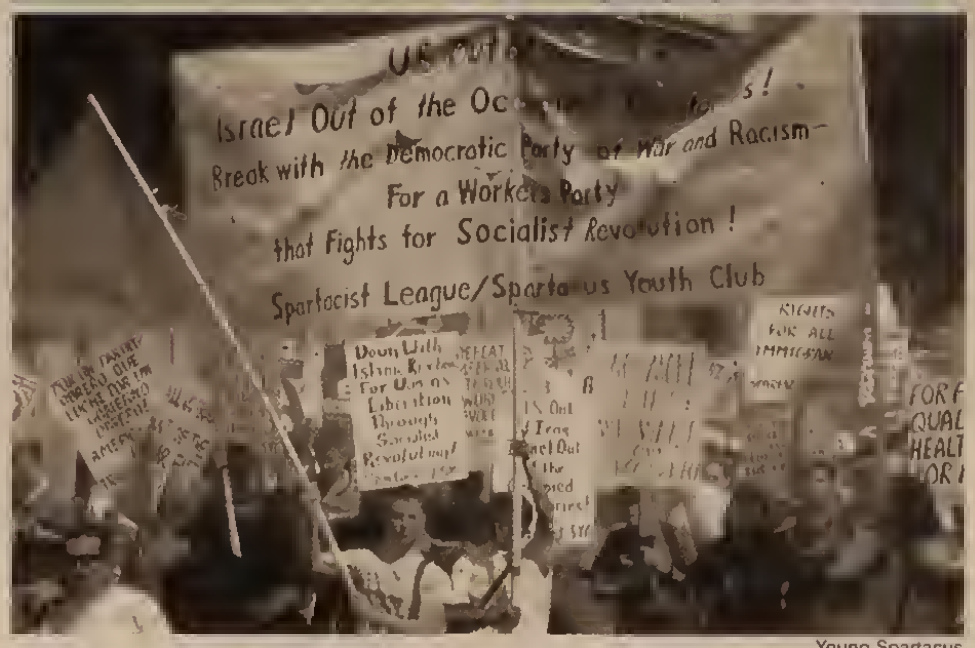
For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!

What does Iraq look like since the ballyhooed handover of sovereignty? Exactly like a country under merciless U.S. imperialist military occupation with handpicked satraps returned from exile and crowned by Washington as local "democratic" leaders. The new prime minister, Iyad Allawi, is a thug who did wet work for the American CIA, British MI6 and the Ba'ath Party's intelligence agency. Just days before becoming prime minister, Allawi personally shot dead six handcuffed and blindfolded prisoners in the courtyard of a Baghdad police station (reported by Paul McGeough, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July). The morgue overflows with rotting corpses and as the mercury hits 114 degrees Fahrenheit, "Baghdad is a city that reeks with the stench of the dead" (Robert Fisk, London *Independent*, 28 July).

Ordinary citizens are blown to bits by the American military at checkpoints all over Baghdad festooned with signs reading, "Do not enter or you will be shot." Scores more are killed by suicide bombers who make no distinction between Iraqis lining up for jobs or waiting as their documents are checked and the foreign invaders or their police lackeys. The official unemployment figure in Iraq is now 70 percent. Latest estimates of the number of civilians killed (the American occupiers don't bother to count how many civilians they kill) range from over 11,000 to over 13,000.

Patrick Cockburn's Baghdad "Diary" (*London Review of Books*, 22 July) reports:

> "After the disasters of the past year the Americans know they cannot occupy Iraq, even in the short term, without the support of local allies. The problem is that most Iraqis would like Allawi and the interim government to get rid of the suicide bombers and kidnappers—and of the US occupation as well. But the US shows no sign of abandoning its plans to keep Iraq as a client state. It would have a weak army, devoted entirely to counter-insurgency. It would have no tanks, aircraft, missiles or artillery and would resemble a Latin American state of the 1960s with an army and security forces controlled largely by Washington. This was the message brought by Paul Wolfowitz when he turned up in Baghdad in June—accompanied by Kevin Tebbit, the permanent undersecretary at the [British] Ministry of Defence—just before the supposed handover of power. The US will allow Iraq to rearm, but only against its own people."



Young Spartacus

Spartacist contingent at March 20 protest in Los Angeles against U.S. occupation of Iraq.

What about areas of Iraq where the U.S. military has retreated and turned over control to former Ba'athist officers, Sunni Muslim clerics or their Shi'ite counterparts? In Falluja, women have been forced back into veils, prohibited from wearing make-up or participating in public life under the recently imposed Islamic *sharia* law. A street poster "decree of Allah" threatens, "We will have no pity for those who oppose Allah by their beauty or mode of dress" (*Le Monde*, 30 June). Houses are raided where "sinners" are believed to be drinking alcohol or listening to music other than Koranic chants. School kids with "indecent" haircuts are surrounded by *mujahedin* trucks, hauled off, beaten and shaved bald, dangerously branded as infidels. Ghaith Abdul-Ahad (London *Guardian*, 25 June) writes that it's now "Falluja versus Falluja." The mayor handed him two letters. One warns, "Be careful, oh brothers, because the Americans and their traitor allies, the Kurds and the Shias, are planning to come after your leaders." The other is addressed to the UN, demanding that Iraq be run by Sunni army officers. Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to bomb the city with impunity.

As revolutionary Marxists, we have a side in the current situation, against the U.S., its allies and Iraqi lackeys. Our starting point is to demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops, and their allies. We defend the peoples of Iraq against any U.S.-led attack and repression. Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers (including the over 20,000 private mercenaries operating in the country), we call for their military defense against

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Supreme Court Ruling Threatens Mumia Abu-Jamal

Free Mumia Now!

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

A June 24 Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Beard v. Banks* puts the death sentence back in court in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death. Ruling on Jamal's federal *habeas corpus* challenge to his conviction and death sentence, in December 2001 federal district court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal's sentence. Yohn overturned the death sentence on the grounds that the jury failed to consider mitigating circumstances (reasons prescribed by law why Jamal should not be executed) and that only a unanimous vote on such mitigating circumstances could spare him the death sentence. This procedure was explicitly found unconstitutional by the 1988 Supreme Court ruling in *Mills v. Maryland*. At the same time Yohn affirmed the conviction, refusing to even hear the confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed Faulkner. The prosecution appealed, seeking restoration of Jamal's death sentence. Mumia appealed, seeking to overturn the conviction.

In the *Beard v. Banks* decision in June, written by Clarence Thomas, the Supreme Court grotesquely ruled that the *Mills* holding could not be used to challenge cases decided before 1988—i.e., it could not be applied retroactively. Although the jury procedure that sent George Banks to death row was identical to that found unlawful in the *Mills* case, Mills would live while Banks (and dozens of others) is to die on the technicality that his case became "final" ***eight months before*** the *Mills* decision. This is just the latest in a labyrinth of court rules, legal machinations and sleight-of-hand used to secure the executions of hundreds of death row inmates after evidence of innocence and exposure of gross constitutional violations that put them in the shadow of death in the first place.

In the 1992 *Herrera* case, the Supreme Court announced that the execution of an innocent person is not unconstitutional. Democratic president Clinton's 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and a 1995 Pennsylvania law adopting draconian

COC Productions

time limitations for "discovering" new evidence to challenge a death sentence, have both been used by federal and state courts to bar Beverly's confession and other evidence of Mumia's innocence.

For over two years, Jamal's *habeas corpus* appeal has been on hold as his state appeal wended its way through the

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 831 — GCIU C-701 — 3 September 2004

U.S. Out of Iraq!

Imperialist Massacre in Najaf

AUGUST 30—As we go to press, an uneasy truce appears to have been established under the auspices of Shi'ite ayatollah al-Sistani between the U.S. occupation forces and the Shi'ite leader Moktada al-Sadr and his Mahdi Army. But Najaf is a shattered city, with up to a thousand dead, and U.S. bombing continues in Sunni Falluja, as the massively armored, brutal, torturing occupation army continues to rape Iraq.

During the past month's military assault by U.S. troops against Najaf, it was the duty of proletarian forces internationally to offer military defense to the forces of the Mahdi Army against the imperialists' onslaught. This would include acts of solidarity, such as halting U.S. arms shipments through work stoppage actions internationally. There is growing sentiment in the U.S. against the occupation, but American workers have to go beyond that and actively champion the military defense of those fighting the occupation. This will require a struggle against the craven and pro-imperialist trade-union misleaders who tie the workers to their class enemy.

Despite the insurmountable divide in politics and worldview between ourselves, secular Marxists, and the Islamic fundamentalists around the reactionary Shi'ite leader al-Sadr, in the battle for Najaf the side of the working class was clearly with the Madhi Army. As we wrote in our last article on Iraq, "As revolutionary Marxists, we have a side in the current situation, against the U.S., its allies and Iraqi lackeys.... Insofar as the forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers (including the over 20,000 private mercenaries operating in the country), we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. Every blow struck against the imperialist occupiers is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world" ("U.S. Out of Iraq Now!" *WV* No. 830, 6 August).

Meanwhile, even as the Pentagon

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Venezuela

U.S. Imperialism's Referendum Ploy Fails

Populist Capitalist Ruler Chávez Prevails

Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez scored a 58 to 42 percent victory over his opponents in the August 15 recall referendum. The recall referendum was the third attempt by the CIA and Venezuela's right-wing bourgeois parties to oust Chávez. In April 2002, they briefly succeeded with a military coup and demonstrated their commitment to "democracy" by dissolving the legislature. This was followed in the winter of 2002-2003 by lockouts and strikes organized by the bosses aimed at crippling the economy. The National Endowment for Democracy, a money-laundering conduit for the CIA, funneled millions of dollars to fund anti-Chávez marches, sabotage land reform projects, disrupt services, and line the pockets of the military officers, police and politicians the CIA favors over the populist Chávez.

Despite the red-scare tactics of the kooks and neocons in the Bush administration, more rational spokesmen for imperialism's interests washed their hands of the three-time losers in Venezuela's opposition and accepted Chávez as a man who could be trusted to protect their investments. Chávez has been able to beat back repeated efforts by the Bush administration and its local agents to topple him by maintaining a strong base of support among the Venezuelan population and

AP photos

Above: Capitalist strongman Hugo Chávez waves to crowds after casting ballot in August 15 referendum. Right: August 12 rally by Washington-backed opposition calls for "Yes" in referendum that sought to oust Chávez.

sections of the armed forces. As opposed to the Venezuelan ruling class, which is overwhelmingly white, racist and hostile to the poor non-white population, Chávez proudly promotes his indigenous and African ancestry. And given the long history of U.S. imperialist incursions into Latin America, propping up murderous right-wing regimes, typically military juntas, Chávez's anti-imperialist posture resonates with much of the population.

Moreover, to a certain degree Chávez has translated his nationalist-populist rhetoric into actual reforms beneficial to the poor in a country where some 80 percent of the population lives in abject poverty. This ability, however, is largely dependent on the fact that the Venezuelan economy has enjoyed historically high oil prices in the world market over the past couple of years. The oil revenue windfall has allowed the government, for example, to triple the budget for education (according to official figures), increasing school attendance by 25 percent by 2002. Free medical clinics have been established, staffed by more than 17,000 Cuban doctors and dentists, in exchange for cheap Venezuelan oil exported to Cuba. Faced with the latest effort to oust him via the referendum, Chávez introduced further social reforms, such as free food distribution to the poor as well as nationalizing and distributing unused agricultural land. He also commendably naturalized some 1.2 million desperately poor immigrants, many of them refugees from Colombia, which deepened his political base in the run-up to the referendum.

However, these programs, in themselves quite progressive, are ***not*** based

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Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Jerry Dale Lowe Released from Federal Prison

Jerry Dale Lowe with his wife, Lea, before being sent to prison.

After close to eleven years in federal prison in Ashland, Kentucky, United Mine Workers (UMWA) militant Jerry Dale Lowe is almost home. He was released in early August to a halfway house in Charleston, West Virginia and can spend two days per week at home with his wife, Lea; he hopes to be a free man in October. He told *Workers Vanguard*: "I just thank everybody for their support and everything they've done for us."

This is indeed a bittersweet homecoming for a fourth-generation union miner who was framed up on federal charges of "interfering with interstate commerce" stemming from the shooting death of a scab contractor in a bitterly fought seven-month strike in 1993 in Logan County, West Virginia. This strike was part of a disastrous UMWA International ten-month campaign of "selective strikes" which dumped the union's arsenal of class-struggle tactics.

On 22 July 1993, Lowe, the safety committee chairman of Local 5958, was on picket duty at Arch Mineral's Ruffner Mine, facing armed thugs from Elite Security, who regularly took shots at the union picket shack and tear-gassed it repeatedly. As a convoy of scabs and goons left the mine, a scab contractor was killed by a bullet to the back of the head—*from the direction of the goons of Elite Security at the mine.*

When West Virginia state officials could find no basis to charge Lowe and seven other union brothers with *anything*, Democratic president Clinton's Justice Department stepped in with manufactured charges of "conspiracy to interfere with interstate commerce," even though the scab truck had never been driven out of the state. The seven other men accepted a plea bargain, but Lowe refused to cut a deal with prosecutors who were trying to frame him for the shooting. The prosecutors claimed that the fatal bullet might have come from a pistol that Lowe had owned at one time. ***But the court refused to allow evidence that Lowe had sold the gun prior to the shooting!***

Although his local union brothers supported him, the UMWA International tops led by Richard Trumka did not mobilize union power to back Lowe in the courtroom or on the streets. The December 1993 sellout settlement of the strike explicitly excluded amnesty for anyone facing federal charges. Through one rejected appeal after another, Jerry Dale Lowe faced the wrath of the capitalist state without the support of his union because the UMWA tops and the rest of AFL-CIO officialdom have a policy of pressuring capitalist politicians instead of fighting for their members. As a miner, Lowe should be getting help from his union to find a job right now. But there is no evidence of this happening.

Jerry Dale Lowe's "crime" was to defend his union, and in a very real way, as the union safety man, he defended the lives and limbs and lungs of his co-workers. It's no surprise that he was a target in the bitter class battle of 1993. The erosion of working conditions, the loss of union jobs, the rising rate of industrial accidents can all be traced to unanswered attacks on unions and union militants like Lowe.

As a class-war prisoner, Lowe had been the recipient of a modest monthly stipend from the Partisan Defense Committee. And workers in many industries followed his case in *Workers Vanguard* and the Partisan Defense Committee's *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* and yearned to see him free. Though he should never have spent a day in jail, we are happy that he will be a free man soon.

You can write to Jerry Dale Lowe at:
102 Athens Ave.
Charleston, WV 25306-6334

TROTSKY

LENIN

Black Liberation and the Struggle for Workers Revolution

In a 1933 document entitled "Communism and the Negro" (published by Verso in 2003 under the title Race and Revolution*), Max Shachtman, then a Trotskyist leader, powerfully argued that the oppression of black people was a fundamental component of American capitalism and that the working class as a whole could not take power without actively championing the rights of the black masses. Today, we of the Trotskyist Spartacist League raise the call for black liberation through socialist revolution as a central element of our program.*

Under the heel of oppression and exploitation which crushes the Negro masses lie also tens of millions of American workers and poor farmers, and additional tens of millions in the colonies and spheres of influence of Wall Street imperialism. For the masses in Latin America, the struggle for liberation from Yankee oppression is bound up by a thousand invisible threads with the movement of the American working class to overthrow the power of its imperialist exploiter. But that movement, in turn, is inseparably connected with the position and interests of the black millions....

It is impossible for the American workers to make any real progress towards freedom without gaining the support of the vast reservoir of strength and militancy constituted by the twelve million black people. This support cannot be gained until the white workers become the most uncompromising champions of the Negro. It depends entirely upon the white proletariat whether the colored masses of America will form a bulwark of reaction or a battering ram of revolution and progress. For if the workers stand out as the unflinching defenders of the Negroes, the latter will put no serious obstacles in the path of cementing an invincible alliance against the ruling class. But if they regard the Negro as their inferiors, if they merely tolerate his assistance, if they try to deal with his burning problems by cowardly half-measures or formal and evasive palliatives, the Negro will rightly turn his back upon the working class as undeserving of his support.

The class struggle in the United States has reached the stage where this unity of the Negro race with the white proletariat and poor farmers is not only possible and necessary, but inevitable. It is our view that the whole past history of the Negro in the United States has brought him inexorably to the position where his daily interests as well as his future in society is tied up with this unity. The conditions of his development in the capitalist order makes it impossible for the Negro to advance any longer by a single step if he relies upon his own resource and efforts. Nor can he progress any farther by allying himself with any section of the ruling class, be it the big capitalists or the small, in the North or the South, or even the capitalistic elements in his own race. His destiny is now connected with only one stratum of society: the working class.

—Max Shachtman, "Communism and the Negro" (1933)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint

The closing date for news in this issue is 31 August.

No. 831 **3 September 2004**

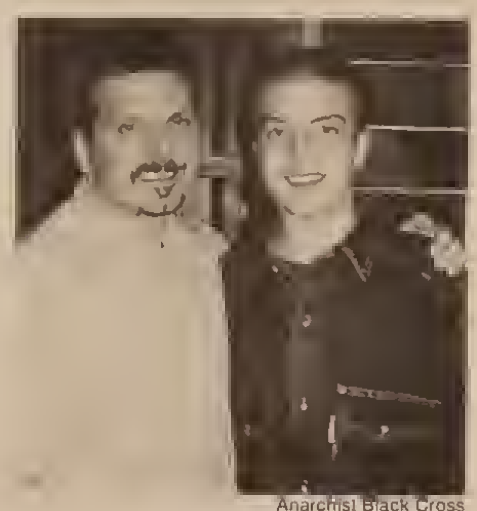
Jaan Laaman Thrown in Solitary for Solidarity with DNC and RNC Protests

Class-war prisoner Jaan Laaman has spent almost two decades behind bars. Like Ray Luc Levasseur, who was recently paroled, Laaman was part of the Ohio 7, leftist activists who were convicted for their role in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. From the standpoint of the working class, the actions of the Ohio 7 against U.S. imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime, and these courageous activists should not have served a day in prison. The Partisan Defense Committee sent the following protest letter on 14 August to the superintendent of MCI Cedar Junction in South Walpole, Massachusetts where Jaan Laaman is imprisoned.

We have learned that class-struggle prisoner Jaan Karl Laaman has been thrown into solitary confinement. It is clear this punishment is a political reprisal for his statement of support to demonstrators opposed to both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. The Partisan Defense Committee demands the immediate release of Mr. Laaman from solitary confinement.

Just days before protesters marching from Boston to New York rallied outside the Walpole MCI facility, Jaan Laaman was thrown in the "hole." He had written a statement of solidarity with the marchers in which he reiterated his opposition to the bipartisan war against the peoples of Iraq as well as equally bipartisan war on democratic rights domestically. For exercising his First Amendment right to free speech, Mr. Laaman is subjected to draconian punishment where he was held incommunicado for over a week and is still locked down in solitary confinement.

It is more than obvious that Mr. Laaman is subject to these onerous conditions because of his political convictions. He remains an outspoken anti-imperialist political prisoner who has solidarized with the grievances of black and Latino prisoners. For this he is repeatedly denied transfer from the more repressive section of the prison and has not even been allowed to see his close supporter and fiancée for over a year.



Anarchist Black Cross

Jaan Laaman with his son Rick at Leavenworth prison, 1999.

In the eyes of class-conscious workers throughout the world, Jaan Laaman has committed no crime. We demand an end to the persecution of this courageous prisoner as we fight to win the workers movement to struggle for freedom of all class-war prisoners. Again we demand the immediate release from solitary confinement of Jaan Laaman!■

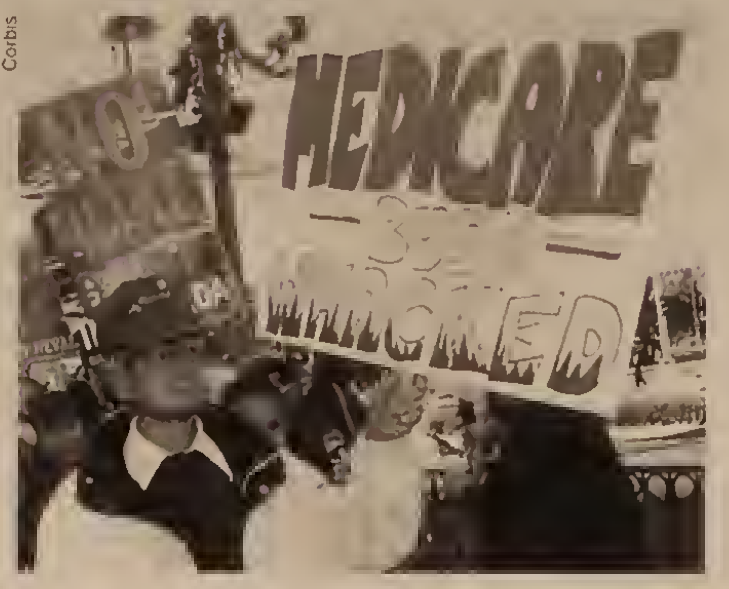
On Seniors and the Disabled

7 July 2004

Editor
Workers Vanguard

Could you address the situation of seniors and the disabled? There are many persons like myself living on SSI, and the general opinion is that we must vote for the Democrats since they "protect" our benefits from the Republicans, who would like to abolish the whole thing. How true is this scenario? What are the facts? And what is the revolutionary view for those dependent on capitalist largesse? They give us only an inadequate pittance on which to live, but I don't hear any "socialists" saying we should get any more—after all, we are not "workers"! What does your party say?

Yours,
Clayton C.C. O'Claerach



Corbis

Protesters demonstrate against Medicare "reform."

***WV* replies:** It is one of the outrages of life in the capitalist United States that impoverished seniors and disabled people—many of whom barely survive on what O'Claerach aptly calls an "inadequate pittance"—live in constant fear of losing even those few, begrudgingly distributed dollars. Last Friday, Fed chairman Alan Greenspan warned of "abrupt and painful" consequences if Social Security and Medicare benefits are not slashed. United Airlines is one of the most recent corporations to announce that it will seek to redress its bankruptcy on the backs of its workers and eliminate its pension plan—the largest pension default ever by a U.S. company. Two years ago, the spectacular meltdown of Enron resulted in 19,000 former employees seeing their jobs and future well-being evaporate.

Such attacks occur not simply because the capitalists are heartless brutes (which they are) but because of the logic of the capitalist system. Pension payments and most health care costs are, from the capitalists' point of view, unproductive overhead expenses that lower overall profitability. Not only in the U.S. but in Europe and Japan as well, the capitalists are taking the ax to such benefits as part of the drive to increase their competitiveness on the international market.

It may appear that seniors carry a lot of weight since they represent a sizable voting bloc. But both the Democratic and Republican parties represent the capitalist class and can only serve their interests at the expense of working people and the oppressed. Their differences amount to style and occasional tactics, not fundamental program. George Bush and his cronies give the impression that they find it invigorating and enjoyable to throw poor mothers and their children onto the street—ending the day by clinking champagne glasses with billionaire supporters to whom they promise tax cuts. The Democrats occasionally sigh about how hard it is for them to throw poor mothers and their children onto the street...then do so.

For the coming presidential election, the Republicans and Democrats have been competing for seniors' votes by tussling over the Medicare "reform" bill passed late last year, which will clearly eliminate much of the meager health coverage that now allows poor seniors to obtain some prescription drugs. John Kerry is exploiting his opposition to this Medicare "reform" by courting seniors through a new organization, "Seniors for Kerry-Edwards," which highlights the supposedly solid opposition of the Democrats to this increasingly unpopular bill. Yet in fact, Medicare "reform" passed with significant bipartisan support, particularly in the Senate.

The real power to turn back the capitalists' attacks lies not in the voting booth but in the strength of the working class, whose social power is based on its position in society at the point of production. Gains for the oppressed have always been won when the labor movement flexes its muscle and fights; this is precisely how Social Security was won in the 1930s. And the working class has a powerful interest in combatting the desperate conditions of poor elderly and disabled people; after all, every worker faces the prospect of old age, and any worker can become disabled. In 1995, the French government's assault on retirement and health care programs triggered an enormous upsurge in class struggle by public sector workers that for three weeks brought the country to a crawl. As in a number of strikes in the U.S., a central issue in the recent five-month strike by the UFCW against the supermarket bosses in Southern California was defense of medical coverage.

What led to the defeat of those extremely popular strikes was the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, which kept the strikes isolated and then sold them out. The class collaboration of the workers' leaders in this country is encapsulated by their support for—and integration into—the Democratic Party. This is the reason the ruling class has largely been able to get away with its vicious war against everybody from unionists to welfare mothers, black people, immigrants, seniors and the disabled. The craven misleaders of the labor movement and assorted reformists push the idea that the working class and oppressed must support the Democrats in order to prevent the Republicans from doing even more horrible things. Such illusions have only served to politically disarm the working class, preventing it from making any but the most feeble protest as *both* capitalist parties have made war on it.

Illusions in the Democrats as a "lesser evil" make them if anything *better* (for the bourgeoisie) than the Republicans at driving down the living standards of the working class and oppressed. One of the main "achievements" of the last Democratic administration was the fulfillment of Clinton's vow to "end welfare as we know it" in 1996, resulting in thousands of poor people being forced into miserably paying "workfare" jobs and eliminating disability payments for large numbers of children as well as immigrants. Clinton also took aim at Social Security, effectively slashing $17.5 billion in his first year in office by increasing taxes on benefits, later cutting billions from Medicare (see "Feds Loot Social Security," *WV* No. 669, 30 May 1997).

We fight for free, quality medical care, housing and a decent standard of living for everybody, including those whose age, illness or physical disability forces them to be dependent on the state (or on younger members of their family). We therefore favor any monetary increase or improvement in benefits that can be wrested from the state. Ultimately, there can and will be no real social security, or end to poverty and unemployment, homelessness and racist oppression except through establishing—through socialist revolution—a planned, collectivized economy governed in the interests of working people. That requires a revolutionary workers party, forged in political struggle against the reformist leaders of the working class.

Just as the vicious mistreatment of the sick, elderly and defenseless graphically demonstrates the depravity of this capitalist system, so would the inclusion of such individuals in a socialist society demonstrate the fundamental decency, as well as rationality, of the world envisioned by Karl Marx. Marx described this future society as one that would be based on the principle "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." In other words, he recognized that due to physical differences in human beings, not every individual will be able to work at the same level for the whole of society, but will participate as he or she is able and reap the benefits the socialist society is able in turn to provide. This is the world we want to build, by putting the working class in power around the globe. ■

Solidarity with Palestinian Hunger-Strikers!

The following August 30 letter was sent by the Partisan Defense Committee to the Israeli government.

The Partisan Defense Committee protests the inhumane treatment accorded Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and insists that the Palestinian hunger-strikers' urgent demands be granted immediately. Since August 15, over 3,000 Palestinian prisoners, many of whose lives are reportedly in danger, have refused any nourishment other than water. The hunger-strikers are demanding increased access to telephones, a cessation of humiliating strip searches and an end to the severe restrictions on family visits. The hunger-strikers' demands are so minimal and basic that they demonstrate the desperate quality of their incarceration.

Israeli officials have reacted to the hunger strike with typical racist vindictiveness. Prison staff are reportedly withholding necessary medical care from striking prisoners. Officials have imposed additional sanctions, banning all family visits as well as the sale of cigarettes and candy. Public Security Minister Tzahi Hanegbi vowed not to cede to the hunger-strikers' demands, declaring that they could "starve to death, as far as I am concerned."

Conditions in Israeli prisons and detention centers are notoriously cruel and inhuman. Palestinian prisoners are routinely subjected to solitary confinement for extended periods of time, denial of due process, arbitrary and indiscriminate beatings and—openly acknowledged—torture. The Palestinian hunger-strikers' demands represent a cry of protest against this system of brutal repression, which richly deserves to be brought to an end. ***Grant the hunger-strikers' demands! Free all victims of Zionist state terror!***

American "Boob-oisie"

Austin, Texas
10 June 2004

Dear Editors:

I write to express concern about language used in the article "The Nipple That Shook the Moral Foundation of a Nation," *WV*, no. 820, 20 Feb. 2004. The language that concerns me is the following: "...overfed, drunken nuclear families...."

The intention of the article was to criticise bourgeois morality. There is nothing educational about the statement above. It is a gross, elitist insult, nothing more. How can the *Workers Vanguard* hope to win over working-class readers if it flings at them the epithet "overfed" and "drunken."

The paper states that signed articles do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint of the *Workers Vanguard*. This particular article was unsigned suggesting that the statement *does* express the editorial viewpoint. I certainly hope that this is not the case.

Sincerely,
Robert L. Smale

***WV* replies:** Apologies to svelte and sober workers everywhere. The complete sentence referred to states: "What H.L. Mencken called the 'American booh-oisie' is in full frenzy following the Super Bowl, all because the kids, sitting around family TV sets in the bosom of their overfed, drunken nuclear families, finally got to see something interesting on network TV." We weren't referring to workers at all; rather, what the writer had in mind was the "boob-oisie's" own kids, referencing the stifling hypocrisy of petty-bourgeois families, like the Dursleys in the Harry Potter stories, who self-righteously stuff themselves silly while condemning anything outside their narrow, puritanical world, especially if it's sexy, like the flash of Janet Jackson's nipple. Most people in this country do not live in "nuclear families"—that is, the unit of husband/wife and their own kids—and the lower on the economic scale you go, the less likely it is such bourgeois formations exist. Given the huge drop in real wages over the past decades and massive cuts in social services, most everybody we know has to scramble in various messy, non-suburban, non-nuclear ways to get by. ■

Over 1,000 Arrested—Drop All the Charges!

NYC: 500,000 Protest RNC

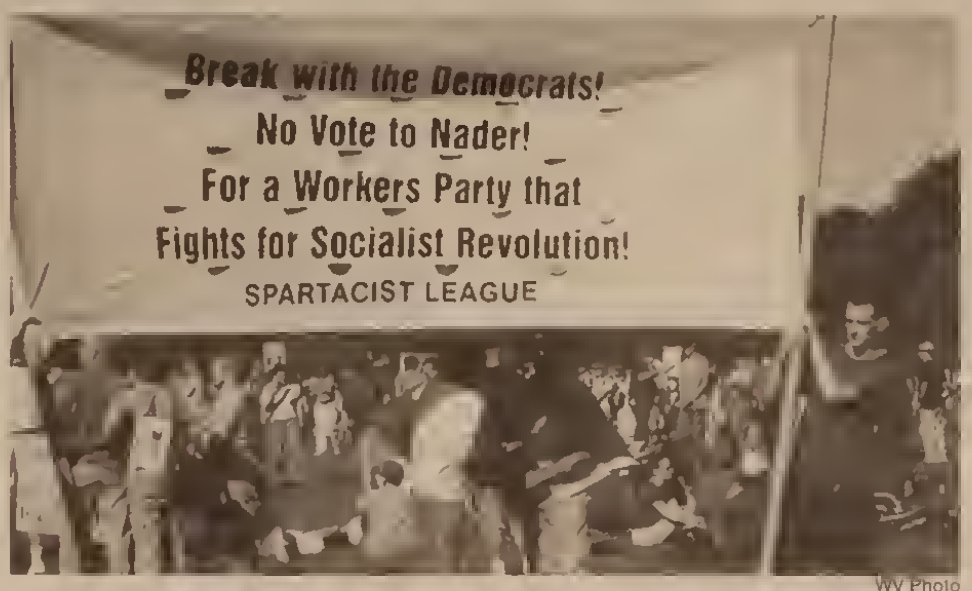
AUGUST 31—Half a million people marched in New York City in a protest organized by United for Peace and Justice against the "Bush agenda" and the Iraq war and occupation on August 29. This huge march spoke to the anger of millions who are fed up with the lies and cruelty of the Bush administration. Military families, who are usually conservative, marched with photos of their sons and daughters killed in Iraq. A wide spectrum of contingents representing organized labor, AIDS activists, the homeless, fighters for civil rights, women's rights and socialists mobilized for the protest.

The August 29 protest against the Republican National Convention (RNC) was conceived and carried out as a mobilization for the Democratic Party. The Spartacist League energetically intervened with a counterposed revolutionary alternative. The growing discontent with the vicious gang in the White House should not be squandered by supporting their partners in crime, the Democrats. Our banner reading, "U.S. Out of Iraq! Israel Out of the Occupied Territories! Break with the Democratic Party of War and Racism—For a Workers Party That Fights for Socialist Revolution!" was a magnet that attracted those justly fed up with the shell game of voting every four years for one or another capitalist party to oppress the working people here and worldwide. Our comrades also raised a banner in Central Park, joining others who defied the city's outrageous ban on rallying there. Spartacist comrades sold over 1,300 newspapers and more than 20 subscriptions.

The police-state tactics against protesters and infringements of everyone's democratic rights to free speech and assembly are a good indication of how much the government fears the working people and the left. While the right-wing media launched a campaign of hysteria, portraying those who engaged in civil disobedience as "extremists" and, effectively, as "terrorists," the liberals went out of their way to condemn militant protesters.

The government's new "red scare" equates dissent with "terrorism," and treats protesters like the "enemy within." FBI counterterrorism agents took aim at youth organizers, sniffing around for "possible violence" in advance of protests outside the two capitalist party conventions this summer. Three youth in Missouri are now targets of a domestic terrorism investigation and were subpoenaed to testify before a federal grand jury. To say this "chills" free speech is to liken an iceberg to a popsicle: the Feds are preemptively stopping people from participating in protests before any demonstration, much less any crime, has occurred. Indymedia reports that the Secret Service attempted to snare activists by asking Indymedia's Web server to provide user connection logs.

As we go to press, over 1,000 demonstrators have been arrested in protests against the RNC. Many were held for more than a day without recourse to a phone call or a lawyer and penned in a sludge and oil-slicked warehouse on a pier in the Hudson River. Protesters who rappelled down the Plaza Hotel with a banner with the words "Bush" and "Truth" inside arrows pointing in opposite directions face felony charges because a cop chasing them cut himself on a cracked skylight. Nine other protesters arrested August 29 face seven years in prison on trumped-up felony assault charges. *Release the RNC protesters! Drop the charges!*



WV Photo

Spartacists join others in defying ban on protests in Central Park, August 29.

We reprint below an August 21 statement issued by the Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee protesting the ban on demonstrations in Central Park.

* * *

The Republicans are preparing to descend upon New York City to re-nominate George W. Bush as their presidential candidate. The Republican Party—along with the Democratic Party, the other party of war and racism—is responsible for the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the intensifying war on working people and the oppressed at home. And, so, many people want to protest. In response, New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration has launched an all-out attack on the fundamental rights of free speech and assembly of those seeking to protest the Republican National Convention (RNC). The city has denied access to the Great Lawn in Central Park to the International ANSWER coalition and the National Council of Arab Americans (NCA), which are planning a demonstration on August 28, and to United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), which is planning a demonstration on August 29. The utterly absurd pretext for the denials is that the grass may get trampled! The city administration has been doing everything to prevent people from protesting where they want to, including trying to ghettoize the rallies on the desolate West Side Highway. Both ANSWER/NCA and UFPJ have filed lawsuits seeking to overturn the ban. We say: *Down with the ban on Central Park! Protesters have a right to rally wherever they want!*

A taste of what anti-RNC protesters will be facing was at hand during the protests outside the Democratic National Convention in Boston last month, where the city set up a "free speech zone"—a razor-wire steel cage outside the Fleet Center and under an elevated freeway—which protesters rightly largely ignored. New York City plans to far outdo Boston in state repression. Under the guise of the "war on terror" and in preparation for the RNC, the Bloomberg administration has kept the city in an ongoing state of "code orange," as cops armed with automatic rifles ominously patrol the subways. The NYPD has openly admitted to infiltrating planning meetings for the anti-RNC protests, and the FBI has been going around interviewing people, particularly targeting anarchists and spreading the vile and dangerous lie that they are "violent." Now, in an unprecedented move, the city administration has announced its intention to open the sealed records of people whose charges stemming from protest arrests were previously dismissed. The "security" hysteria surrounding the RNC is also aimed at those Democratic Party opponents of the Bush administration who would mobilize in the streets. Through its intimidation tactics, the powers that be are trying to frighten people from protesting against the oddly demented and war-crazed Bush administration. This must be met with a defiant and mass protest against all aspects of the bi-partisan war on working people at home and abroad.

The hysteria surrounding the right to march against the RNC comes in the context of the vicious occupation of Iraq, U.S. imperialism's "war on terror" and the intensification of government repression following the September 11 attacks. The ANSWER/NCA demonstration is specifically called against the racist and anti-immigrant government attacks on the rights of Arabs and Muslims. As Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, the attorney for ANSWER and NCA, put it at a court hearing on August 20, the city's claims that the protesters should be content with demonstrating outside Central Park and Manhattan altogether is akin to telling black people that they should not complain about being at the back of the bus and instead be content with being on the bus at all. What became clear at the court hearing is that the city administration is trying to pit ANSWER/NCA against UFPJ, arguing that if forced to grant ANSWER/NCA a permit in Central Park, the city would use this to deny UFPJ its permit under the pretext that the rallies are only a day apart. The ANSWER/NCA attorney rightly denounced this despicable maneuver.

From opposition to gay marriage to opposition to giving drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants, the government has been on a campaign to eviscerate everybody's rights. During an August 17 press conference where Bloomberg cynically welcomed "peaceful protesters" (i.e., those willing to allow themselves to be locked into police pens) with offers of discounts at Applebee's (!), activists from CODEPINK: Women For Peace were arrested as they attempted to unfurl a banner criticizing Bloomberg for denying demonstrators access to Central Park. Drop the charges now! This is not the first time that the Bloomberg administration has tried to turn the streets of New York into a police state; recall in February 2003 when the administration tried to prevent UFPJ from protesting against the then-impending war on Iraq.

Bloomberg stated that free speech is a "privilege" that can be taken away and has vowed to arrest individuals who try to exercise *their rights* and assemble in groups of 20 or more in Central Park. Bloomberg's actions demonstrate what we Marxists recognize as the class nature of the capitalist state, which exists to defend the interests of the ruling capitalist class against working people and the oppressed. Witness the brutal terror regularly meted out by racist NYPD cops against black people in the ghettos. The "anti-terror" frenzy promoted by Democrats and Republicans alike is in reality aimed at the labor movement and the oppressed. When New York transit workers voted to go on strike in late 2002, the media screamed that they were launching a "jihad" and the strikebreaking Taylor Law was invoked. In a 2003 letter signed by Republican House majority leader Tom DeLay, firefighters who had lost over 300 of their comrades trying to save people in the World Trade Center were declared to be a "clear and present danger to the security of the United States" because they are unionized!

We call on all defenders of free speech, the right to assembly, due process and equal protection under the law to oppose the vicious assaults on the rights of anti-RNC protesters and to demand that ANSWER and UFPJ be allowed to rally in Central Park. We of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee are stalwart defenders of democratic and labor rights, including the right of a Marxist workers party to organize. The democratic rights under attack today were won through centuries of struggle and revolution—the parliamentary partisans in the English Civil War, the U.S. Revolutionary War, the Great French Revolution, the American Civil War, the pitched labor battles of the 1930s and the mass movement against Jim Crow segregation. What the government wants to get away with is the ability to label any and all political opponents as "violent" or "terrorists"—categories that will provide the state with a license to suspend democratic rights, criminalize political activity and engage in legalized murder. Whatever rights we have under this oppressive capitalist order were won through tumultuous class and social struggle. Our rights must be defended through the struggles of black people, immigrants and defenders of civil liberties welded to the power of the multiracial labor movement. ■

Masse/Daily News

August 30: NYPD brutalizes anti-RNC protesters.

Young Spartacus

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

How I Became a Revolutionary

We reprint below an application letter to the Spartacus Youth Group, youth auxiliary of the Spartacist League/Britain, as originally published in Workers Hammer *No. 188 (Autumn 2004).*

WORKERS HAMMER

I first became interested in politics when I was eleven years old. A small anti-abortion group was protesting outside our local hospital because it was the one place within a 60-mile radius where a single doctor performed abortions. Every day they stood opposite the hospital with placards showing pictures of aborted fetuses. I began asking questions and at eleven years old I came to the conclusion that it is a fundamental right for women to have safe access to abortion. I spent the following ten years involved in a myriad of left-wing campaigns, including, but not limited to, working on referendums to ban discrimination against gays in employment; protesting the use of child labour by Wal-Mart manufacturers; advancing the economic rights of single mothers; fighting for the rights of tenants; protesting the economic sanctions against Iraq and protesting the bombing of Iraq in 1998. I threw myself into these campaigns with the passion of someone who wanted to see a better and more just world. Though I was involved in many different campaigns, they all had one significant similarity: they all were based on the belief that one could pressure the government into acting on the side of the poor and oppressed.

Though I had many strong beliefs, I never thought beyond the bounds of capitalism. I grew up in a rural, backward area and people did not talk about socialism. I was only eight when the Berlin Wall fell and East and West Germany were united under capitalism, and was ten during counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. I always thought that the best way to advance social justice was to persuade people to vote for social advancements and put constant pressure on the government to advance the rights of the poor and oppressed. I had not yet been exposed to politics with any other method.

My politics began a significant change when I was studying for a Masters degree in "human rights" at the University of Essex. I quickly became involved in the University Peace Campaign, which was organising protests against the upcoming war against Iraq. I threw myself into this campaign with all of my passion and spent Saturdays leafleting in the town centre to build local demonstrations. We collected donations and support petitions for the striking firefighters, and attempted to mobilise campus protests against top-up fees [additional university tuition charges]. This was the first time I heard people discussing socialism on any remotely serious basis and started for the first time to understand that the nature of capitalism is to maximise profit for the few by exploiting the labour of the many. I began making the links between capitalism and war, poverty, racism, and women's oppression; however, I did *not* honestly believe it to be possible to either overthrow capitalism or to rebuild an egalitarian society. This is perhaps why I, as did many others, seemed to believe the Stop the War Coalition and the leaders of sundry left-wing political organisations when they put forward the idea that we could stop the war if we all united together and marched together with a single demand.

Tass

Above: Afghan women reject veil in 1980, as Soviet Red Army intervention opened road to social emancipation. After Soviet withdrawal, women were forced back into oppressive *burka*.

Getty

I spent the two weeks before the 15 February demonstration in London called by Stop the War handing out leaflets at my university and in the town centre in an attempt to build the demonstration. Every day I skipped my classes to spend several hours outside in the bitter February cold selling tickets for seats on our coaches to London. I felt an amazing sense of self-gratification when we filled nine coaches bound for London. I thought that if we got two million people on the streets that would be enough to pressure the British government to listen to the people and not to go to war. All sense of gratification faded shortly after I arrived in London. In every direction I could see liberal placards with slogans such as "US—no, UN—yes" and "No war without a second resolution." I was further disappointed and disillusioned when I reached Hyde Park and began listening to the speakers on the stage. I had previously thought that it was a good thing that the Stop the War Coalition was trying to unite everyone who was simply against the war because I was under the impression that once together, more radical politics would be advanced. I was sorely mistaken. The politicians who took the stage advocated the use of the UN, praised the "peace-loving" French bourgeoisie, and resorted to cheap anti-Americanisms, while little was said to denounce the role of British imperialism. I had arrived at the demo feeling optimistic and empowered, and left feeling disillusioned in the dominant left-wing political tendency in Britain and disappointed at the liberal politics put forward at the demo.

Breaking with Liberalism

At this time I was becoming more radical and unequivocally opposed to capitalism, despite not seeing any clear means to dispose of capitalism and rebuild a socialist society. I marched again at the Stop the War Coalition's London demo during March and felt even more disempowered. The war had officially begun against Iraq and the numbers of demonstrators dropped significantly. It went from two million on the streets in February before the start of the war to significantly fewer in March after the bombing had begun. I quickly understood ***why*** there was such a significant drop in numbers when, by the middle of the demo, I decided that I would never again attend a demo called by Stop the War because they peddled the illusion that we could sufficiently pressure the government into not going to war by merely marching through the streets. I do not think I was alone when I thought that two million people on the streets of London would prevent the British government from going to war; they went to war despite this and it left me and probably at least a million others feeling completely and utterly disempowered.

I, too, would have stayed home and not bothered to march again had I not encountered the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth Group. I had been reading *Workers Vanguard* for a few months and after the March demonstration against the war, I decided to contact the organisation as its revolutionary politics were beginning to become appealing when I realised the utter bankruptcy of reformism. I began meeting with comrades and thinking more seriously about the Soviet Union. I found it initially difficult, as I was too young during the existence of the Soviet Union to understand the significance of its collapse at the time.

At this time my human rights law teacher went to Afghanistan to do a report on the state of women's rights. She returned with nightmarish tales of her research, which was all conducted while she was forced to remain hidden under a full *burka*. She found that it was routine in legal cases for the family of the perpetrator of a crime to hand over their young daughters as property to the victim of the crime as retribution. Girls were routinely stopped on the street and given virginity tests, which lead to a prison term if not passed. The situation for women in Afghanistan at the moment is that of horrific slavery—there is little difference between life under the woman-hating Taliban and under imperialist occupation. The photos from *Workers Vanguard* of women in Afghanistan in the early 1980s during Soviet intervention were significant for me—there were photos of women in modern clothing with rifles slung over their shoulders before going to fight side-by-side with the Soviet army against the *mujahedin*. There were later photos of women in jeans and T-shirts sitting around a table with men at a university studying. Upon discovering that apart from the Spartacist League, all other organisations on the left took the side of the CIA-backed, women-hating, reactionary *mujahedin*, I was disgusted.

The Social Gains of the Bolshevik Revolution

The progressive role that the Soviet Union played in Afghanistan and the fact that most other left organisations sided with reactionary women-hating Islamic fundamentalists first won me over to the distinct politics of the Spartacist League. I began reading more about the Soviet Union and other organisations' line on the topic. Many organisations claim the Soviet Union was not progressive and had some variant form of capitalism. I began doing research for my degree on the state of women in Russia before the 1917 revolution, after the revolution, and after counterrevolution. The findings were shocking and quickly persuaded me that the Soviet Union was progressive for women. The effects of counterrevolution were so devastating for women that it is

continued on page 7

Reader Says, "Take It Easy on Chomsky"

20 July 2004

Yo Bros—

Take it easy on *Noam Chomsky* [see "Noam Chomsky: The Liberal's 'Anarchist'," *WV* No. 829, 9 July]. Chomsky is ***brilliant*** at times. We ***all*** evade dialectical materialism in one way or another. Chomsky is the lesser of fascist evil and he is open to change, I think. Go after *Sen. Rick Santorum of PA instead*, for example.

Patrick O'Connell

***Young Spartacus* replies:**

Dream on.

Report on Toronto Iraq Demo

"The Whole Damn System's Got to Go!"

The following article is reprinted from Spartacist Canada *No. 142 (Fall 2004), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.*

The June 30 Toronto demonstration against the occupation of Iraq split in two, as long-simmering political animosity between the direct action milieu centered on the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) and the "respectable" left exemplified by the International Socialists

SPARTACIST CANADA

(I.S.) [affiliated with the British Socialist Workers Party] came to a head. About 400 went with the June 30th Organizing Committee (June 30th OC), which mobilized anti-capitalist youth to "March south to confront war profiteers!", i.e., Canadian corporations. A smaller group of 300 went with the I.S.-dominated Toronto Coalition to Stop the War (TCSW) on one of its standard peace crawls. The Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club organized a contingent for the anti-capitalist march, in sharp contrast to various self-proclaimed Marxist groups who marched with the I.S. and its liberal/social-democratic allies.

The June 30th OC's mobilizing leaflet stated: "We have been standing outside the U.S. Consulate month after month, and believe we need to focus closer to home on Canadian involvement in U.S. policy, and those companies in our midst that are benefiting from the illegal and increasingly horrifying situation in Iraq. Here in Canada, we have a responsibility to do whatever we can to challenge our government and the businesses they support." In contrast, one of the speakers at the mainstream rally began by thanking the cops for "protecting us" and, in continuing, proclaimed that "we" want peace in Iraq, "like in Canada."

The June 30th OC called for protesters to join them at 6 p.m. on a snake march south through downtown to protest Canadian corporations profiting from the war and occupation. TCSW's response was to try to beat them to the punch by marching north early. They tried to seed the demo for this maneuver with a chant sheet/march map that said demonstrators should keep to the "official" march route, and sent an ineffectual "agitator" to try to draw people out of the June 30th OC crowd on the basis of "unity" and "solidarity." Some of their officials yelled at OCAP organizers that they were "not allowed" to lead protesters south. This did confuse a few youth, who were vacillating after hearing TCSW's denunciations of the June 30th OC for "splitting" the demo. We argued with a few of these youth not to fall for it—that the march south was against Canadian capital, and that it was the TCSW that was splitting the demo in an attempt to marginalize left-wing youth. One activist got up on top of a speaker to exhort demonstrators to come with the June 30th OC, apparently after he was denied the coalition's mike. In the upshot, the direct action milieu led a bigger chunk of the crowd away from the consulate.

The June 30th OC had led two actions earlier in the day, including a 2 p.m. picket of 40-50 people against a corporation setting up private hospitals in Iraq. We joined this picket. At 4 p.m. some 250 youth assembled to block a downtown intersection but were prevented by a heavy cop mobilization. They then

Spartacist Canada

June 30: Trotskyist League banner at Toronto Iraq demonstration.

marched to the main rally site, arriving with a splash, chanting "One, two, three, four, we don't want your f---ing war! Five, six, seven, eight, stop the killing, stop the hate!" It was somewhat integrated and contained a lot of young people from the suburbs, many of them high school students.

Our contingent of 18 people went with a banner and bullhorn on the snake march, with two comrades going north with TCSW to sell and report. Our banner read "U.S. out of Iraq! Canada out of Afghanistan! For class struggle against Canadian capitalism! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!" Mostly the march dodged along, turning here and there to get around a crew of bicycle cops who sought to hem it in and at times block it. The cops had clearly planned their response carefully and had massive reserves waiting largely out of sight while deploying smaller forces to deal with the march directly. They were filming everybody and deployed mounted cops to block the central portion of Bay Street [the financial district] when the march got close to it.

Chants raised by the organizers included "Bay Street's covered in Baghdad's blood," "From Iraq to Palestine, occupation is a crime" (we joined these chants), "No peace in Baghdad, no peace in Toronto," "No justice, no peace," and the "One, two, three..." chant mentioned above. Several of our chants got picked up here and there, in particular "Imperialist occupation, we say no—The whole damn system's got to go!" Comrades noted that some in the milieu around us were determined not to chant anything we raised, while others seemed to be saying to themselves, "My god, I'm chanting along with the Sparts! Have I lost all control?" Our chant, "Quebec bashing, we say no—The whole damn system's got to go!" notably drew ire from some in our vicinity, who tried to prevent it and complained that "we came to a demonstration about Iraq." But any serious fight against the Canadian rulers' attacks on the oppressed abroad has to be connected to their attacks on the oppressed at home. Elements in the direct action milieu are not exempt from the blindness to the oppression of Quebec by the Canadian state that is so rife on the left. That underlines why we need to put the question front and center.

The march stopped for a while outside the HQ of a "security" contractor in the mercenary business and then went one block north, where Bush was burnt in effigy in the middle of an intersection. Left groups on this march were pretty atomized—there were some individuals from the New Socialist Group (NSG) [which originated as a split from the I.S.] as well as one from Socialist Alternative and the Stalinist "Young Left."

Comrades on the northbound march thought it was pretty limp. The official chants were exclusively against the U.S. and not picked up very much. We noted the presence of individuals from the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq, a few NSGers and, notably, the entire contingent from the Bolshevik Tendency (BT). The NSGers, when queried as to why they were on this march and not the southern one, replied that "there are many different lines in the NSG, so we are going on different marches." They have already lost a chunk of members in the direction of anarchism (the Autonomy and Solidarity group), and many NSGers are activists in the OCAP/No One Is Illegal milieu and have political views quite divergent from those of the NSG's warmed-over social-democratic founders. The BT raised the chant "U.S., UK, get out of Iraq today," but otherwise was content to chant along with some of the official slogans.

Our comrades were a highly visible component of the wing of the June 30 protest that sought to oppose the capitalist rulers at home (however its organizers understood this). We ran into people the day after who were talking about the split in the demo; one noted that the march south was chanting communist slogans like "Workers of the world unite" (that was us). The Indymedia discussion site had a slew of postings, largely denouncing the I.S. for their bureaucratic maneuvering and rightist "coalition building." One read, "Why does the I.S. insist on dominating any field it enters and trying to sabotage any alternative actions?" One can expect elements in the anarchoid milieu to put it down to the I.S.'s "Leninism." In fact, the I.S.'s behavior is the antithesis of Leninism. Their actions on June 30 aimed at policing the movement on behalf of the NDP [social-democratic New Democratic Party] politicians, union bureaucrats and the like who speak from their platforms, i.e., at defending the existing, pro-capitalist leadership of the working class. None of the components of the direct action milieu have the perspective to construct an alternative leadership of the working class in political competition with the open reformists, as we do. Their opposition to the I.S.'s reformism thus remains partial and largely at the level of tactical militancy. This explains, for example, OCAP's frequent refusal to polemicize against the NDP.

The march organized by the June 30th Organizing Committee represented an important, if partial, break to the left within the antiwar/anti-occupation movement. Trotskyist League and Spartacus Youth Club comrades attended follow-up organizing meetings, putting forward our political perspective centered on working-class struggle against Canadian capitalism, and pledging to actively build for and join in future actions.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Women's Liberation...

(continued from page 5)

clear that there was a qualitative change in the economic system. In the Soviet Union nearly 95 per cent of women who were able to work were either in employment or full-time education. The entire female sex was more educated and skilled than anywhere else in the world. After the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union, the status of women dropped quickly and dramatically. Most women went from being in skilled employment to jobless and the luckier women resorted to begging in the streets. Women have been pushed into such desperate economic situations that some are being trafficked into sexual slavery. Though prostitution in impoverished areas is common, the phenomenon of highly educated and skilled women resorting to prostitution on a large scale is unique to the former Soviet Union. Many women who were doctors, teachers, or engineers during the existence of the Soviet Union are only able to survive as prostitutes.

It is extremely difficult as a young person at this time, when the imperialist powers and their allies are able to run rampage over defenceless parts of the world, to be able to imagine the overthrow of capitalism in the imperialist centres. I was fortunate enough to attend a recent dayschool put on by the Spartacist League which featured first-hand accounts by ex-miners from the 1984-85 miners strike. The lessons were inspiring, as I learned that though the current political climate and consciousness seems

Workers Hammer

Spartacist contingent at London antiwar protest, February 2003.

bleak, it has not always been this way and it will *not* always continue to be this way. Despite their ultimate defeat, the miners left us with important lessons, such as that the best tool for social advancement is class struggle. While two million people marching through the streets of London on a police-approved demo means little to the bourgeoisie, the class struggle of key industrial workers is what inspires fear in the ruling class. It is the working class that holds the power—and when it can be mobilised to fight in its own interests, *significant* social advances can be made very quickly. The working class is the key to overthrowing capitalism because it is the only class with the interest and the actual social power to bring down the government and possess the skill to start it back up again under workers control.

In 18 months I went from being a reformist who could not see an alternative to capitalism, to becoming a revolutionary committed to the overthrow of capitalism. Though it is difficult, I try not to be too disheartened by the general right-wing shift of even the so-called "socialist" organisations. The SWP [Cliffite Socialist Workers Party] has created its new electoral front—RESPECT, which attempts to corral those who were angry about the war against Iraq into electoral politics. There is no mention of capitalism and no mention of class struggle. This organisation, which purports to be the best left-wing alternative at the moment, has [antiwar Member of Parliament (MP) expelled from the Labour Party] George Galloway as their supreme leader, who is staunchly opposed to abortion. It is no exaggeration to say that I had stronger political principles when I was eleven years old growing up in a rural backward area than the RESPECT Coalition. Though the SWP and other left organisations give lip service to fighting for socialism, they consistently are unwilling to uphold the basic socialist principle of advancing the status of women. The SWP supported the *mujahedin* in Afghanistan who routinely attacked women who showed their faces from behind the veil and cut off the hands of those who dared to teach women to read and write. They cheered counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, which led to the enslavement and desperate impoverishment of millions of women and an increase in prostitution. They currently put forward as their prime candidate in an electoral front an MP who is so staunchly opposed to abortion that he is praised by extremist anti-abortion organisations. It is the fact that we are in such a reactionary time that has made me realise the immense importance that I join those who are genuinely committed to fighting *against* this reaction, *for* the overthrow of capitalism, and *forward* to communism. I firmly state that I unequivocally agree with the programme and pledge to abide by the discipline.

Comradely,
Ariel R.

"Life After Capitalism" Conference Anti-Communist Exclusion Flops

In the "Life After Capitalism" conference sessions at the City University of New York, August 20-22, speakers regularly argued for "Anybody but Bush," which means attendees angered by the war in Iraq should hold their noses and vote for Democrat John "I'd be a better butcher" Kerry. Meanwhile, conference organizers, especially "anti-capitalist" Left Turn, acted on their threatened political exclusion of the communist Spartacus Youth Club, undoubtedly offended by our call to break with the capitalist Democratic Party. (A split out of the International Socialist Organization that quickly liquidated into the "anti-globalization" milieu, Left Turn combines the worst elements of the two.) The SYC was the first "banned" group to set up a table at the conference; we talked politics and distributed literature including leaflets protesting the censorship. Several youth solidarized with us against this exclusion, as did some left groups including the centrist Internationalist Group (IG) and the "third campist" League for the Revolutionary Party.

Shortly after they spotted our tables, the conferenee organizers ordered us and the IG to take them down and then called in campus cops—baldly crossing the class line—when we refused to do so. Notably, the *News and Letters* group hegan chanting "Let them stay! Freedom of speech!" which we and others picked up. At this point the organizers backed down, presumably worried ahout how it would look if they carried out their threat to have us arrested hy the very same NYPD preparing to terrorize protesters against the Republican National Convention. We reprint below the leaflet issued on August 17 protesting our threatened exclusion and the August 16 letter we sent to the president of Hunter College defending the conference against violence-baiting in the bourgeois media.

* * *

Protest Anti-Communist Ban at Life After Capitalism Conference!

We call on defenders of free speech to protest the stated policy of the "anti-authoritarian" Life After Capitalism conference that: "Life After Capitalism will try to remain a space free of sectarian left groupings (you know who you are). Tables will NOT be offered to these groups and those who try to sell papers or other forms of literature without the consensus of the organizing body will he asked to leave." This censorship provoked a wave of protest on Indymedia in response including one writer who aptly noted: "In anti-authoritarian lingo, 'sectarian' = open communist," and another writer who queried: "...how is banning people from attendance at your conference NOT sectarian? Just curious" (nyc.indymedia.org, posted August 9). We note that their un-democratic attack on free speech is not so different from Republican Mayor Bloomberg's attempts to prevent a rally against the Republican National Convention on August 29. We also call on defenders of free speech to oppose the *New York Post*'s false violence-haiting of the Life After Capitalism conference (see SYC statement in support of Life After Capitalism's right to free speech).

In our effort to intersect radical-minded youth looking for a revolutionary program to stop capitalism and end imperialist war, the Spartacus Youth Club sent an e-mail to the organizers of the Life After Capitalism conference requesting a literature tahle. We received the following response: "...this is a conference for mostly anarchist and anti-authoritarian organizers and not a space that would be receptive to members of the SYC. Thanks for your understanding and respect."

While we don't respect Life After Capitalism's anti-communist and very "authoritarian" exclusion, we do understand it. It flows logically from their promotion of pro-Democratic politics—Naomi "Vote Kerry" Klein among others will open the conference—that they feel compelled to ban a revolutionary communist youth organization from distributing our literature. We are well known for opposing both Republicans and Democrats, and for our actions in defense of class war prisoners, such as Mumia Abu-Jamal and recently paroled Sherman Austin, as well as actions to stop the Klan and other fascist provocations. All this is part of our struggle to build a workers party to fight for socialist revolution and to put an end to racist American imperialism. This is what they don't want you to hear.

We have noticed that Life After Capitalism offers a workshop called "The Joy of Protest." In that spirit, we look forward to protesting this anti-communist exclusion together with other leftists, all throughout the conference. We invite the participants to check out the banned communist literature.

* * *

SYC Letter to Hunter Defending Conference

Today's *New York Post* carried an article titled "Finest Prep for Anarchy" which falsely violence-baits the participants of the "Life After Capitalism" conference which will hold its opening event at Hunter College on Friday. This article is of a piece with the Bloomberg administration's efforts at stifling political protest against the Republican National Convention and coincides with national FBI efforts, reported in today's *New York Times*, to intimidate protesters.

As part of defense of the right to free speech, the Spartacus Youth Club urges you not to take any steps against the conference.■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Meet the Marxists on Campus
Wednesday, Sept. 8, 4:30 p.m.
City Café (under the student union)
City College of San Francisco

Video Showing
Thursday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.
"From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal"
100 Wheeler Hall, UC Berkeley
For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Class Series
Wednesday, Sept. 29 6:30 p.m.
U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!
Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!
For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!
York University Student Centre
room to be announced
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

Visit the ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

We print below Part Two of a forum, slightly edited for publication, given by Comrade Don Alexander of the SL/U.S. Central Committee in New York City, 3 April 2004. Part One appeared in WV *No. 830 (6 August).*

PART TWO

I need to point out that the ruling class today is forced to admit that increasingly U.S. society is being resegregated. In a special education supplement (*New York Times*, 18 January) on the 50th anniversary of the *Brown* decision, a writer admits that "Millions of black students are celebrating Brown's anniversary in schools almost as segregated as when it was decided. It is now true, as the court held, that 'separate but equal facilities are inherently unequal.' But 70 percent of black students attend schools in which racial minorities are a majority, and fully a third are in schools 90 to 100 percent minority." Professor Gary Orfield, co-director of the Civil Rights Project at Harvard, has done quite an extensive investigation of the growing resegregation in the U.S. He argues that, practically speaking, the U.S. today hasn't qualitatively progressed beyond the era of formalized segregation embodied in the infamous 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision that sanctioned state-supported segregation in public accommodations.

When you look at what's going on as the schools become more segregated today, the fastest-growing, and now the largest minority affected are Latinos. We, as fighters for a revolutionary vanguard party, point to the common interests of all sections of the oppressed. Our task is to combat not only anti-black racism within the immigrant milieu, but the anti-immigrant chauvinism of many black workers and black people. This is critical from the standpoint of fighting for socialist revolution in this country. What we see is that the ruling class has thrown increasing layers of the population on the scrap heap.

In the annals of judicial history, what they call "*Brown I*" was the Supreme Court decision in 1954 that struck down *Plessy v. Ferguson*. And in "*Brown II*," the second decision a year later, the Supreme Court ordered desegregation with "all deliberate speed," i.e., slowly. In other words, they gave the green light to Southern segregationist foes of integration to obstruct the implementation of that decision. Consequently, by early 1964, a full decade later, only 1.2 percent of black children in the eleven Southern states attended schools with whites. So the law is one thing, and the reality on the ground is another.

Washington Post

Spartacist League initiated 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped KKK march in Washington, D.C., November 1982.

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

These legal decisions are never made in a vacuum, but they are a product of social struggle. Thus, far from being friends of black people, many judges opposed *Brown*. For example, leading segregationist Mississippi Circuit Court judge Tom Brady, in line with the white-supremacist Citizens Councils, asserted that this was "Black Monday" and that the Supreme Court was leaning toward Communism. The segregationists in Little Rock were circulating questionnaires essentially asking whether black boys would be permitted to solicit the white girls at school soirées? Would they be allowed, white girls and black boys in drama classes, to get together? Someone could really do an interesting study on when was the first time, if ever, *Othello* was performed in that part of the country.

When the first *Brown* decision was handed down, it was trumpeted by U.S. imperialism as an expression of American democracy in its finest hour. In 1954 Secretary of State Dean Acheson underlined their interest in *Brown*:

> "Other peoples cannot understand how [school segregation] can exist in a country which professes to be a staunch supporter of freedom, justice, and democracy. The sincerity of the United States in this respect will be judged by its deeds as well as by its words."
>
> —*International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941-1960* (2000)

And of course, they were increasingly embarrassed because the Soviet Union reminded them quite frequently and regularly of the vicious, legalized segregation, while the U.S. rulers railed against "Soviet Communist totalitarianism."

The State Department didn't waste any time in trumpeting the progress in race relations; within an hour of the Supreme Court's decision, the Voice of America broadcast the news all over the world in 35 different languages. And Carl Rowan, a black journalist who was the face of the State Department abroad, traveled far and wide to convince the Third World that America was finally making progress.

Of course it was bull because, in the aftermath of the *Brown* decision, white racist defiance quickly developed. Autherine Lucy, a black woman who wanted to get into graduate school, was attacked by mobs at the University of Alabama when she tried to attend school there in 1956. That angered a lot of European and African governments.

A year earlier, in 1955, Emmett Till fared worse. Emmett Till was a 14-year-old black youth from Chicago visiting relatives in Mississippi. He was lynched for the alleged "crime" of whistling at a white woman. His horribly mutilated body was shown. His mother insisted upon an open casket funeral, and all over the world people saw the barbarity of lynch law. Thousands of black people all over this country marched after that, and many say that the beginnings of the civil rights movement began with the demonstrations around Emmett Till. A couple of weeks ago the *New York Times* (22 March), in an editorial titled "The Ghost of Emmett Till," said that there is a reinvestigation of his murder being planned by the Justice Department because they have new information on Till's murder. If somebody is nailed, he'll probably be 95 years old, on a respirator with one lung, one kidney and one hour to live. And if it's not that, the system is still one of murderous legal lynchings and racist frame-ups that keeps on keeping on. Just look at the cases of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the many other class-war prisoners in this country, like Jerry Dale Lowe.

Every step forward for workers, black people, women and all the oppressed has been won by militant struggle against the racist capitalist system. Reliance on the bourgeois courts politically *disarms* the workers and oppressed. The unions in this country were built by defying the bourgeoisie's laws against trade unions, laws that called unions "criminal conspiracies," which the capitalists could revive again.

Black youth hurled themselves against the infernal machine of the racist, segregationist, law-and-order establishment, playing a very important role in shattering the McCarthyite Cold War consensus and atmosphere in the South. The law had to adjust to the new facts on the ground. In other words, it was no thanks to good-hearted and benevolent judges that the walls of Jim Crow segregation came tumbling down.

Robert Weisbrot, the author of *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement*, noted that before the *Brown* decision:

> "Sporadic local protests also sent a message of growing Negro assertiveness, but few, black or white, received it. In November 1953 forty-eight black soldiers in Columbia, South Carolina, were arrested and fined more than $1,500 because one sat next to a white girl on the bus. That same year a Negro boycott of buses in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, lasted a week before officials permitted blacks and whites to occupy some seats on first-come, first-served basis."

Now, after several decades of bipartisan racist reaction and attacks on the standard of living of the working masses, sections of the ruling class openly embrace the "ghosts of the Confederacy" and their heirs. For example, Attorney General John Ashcroft has expressed his admiration for the Confederacy. Trent Lott, the Republican Senator, got a slap on the wrist for *openly* stating his support for the segregationist Strom Thurmond. Thurmond was the rabid segregationist who led Southern racist resistance to the integration of the armed forces under President Harry S. Truman and bolted from the Democratic Party to form the Dixiecrat Party in 1948. And none other than the current head of the Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, as a

National Archives

Integrated army unit during U.S. imperialism's dirty, anti-Communist war in Korea, 1950. Many black soldiers came back from Korea intent on fighting to overturn Jim Crow segregation in U.S.

clerk to Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, wrote a memo in support of the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. This is the ruling class that is in power.

The Failures of the Civil Rights Movement in the North

When the civil rights movement went North, it ran into a brick wall. It went up against the bedrock of the economic oppression of the black population. It was not de jure (in law) segregation but de facto segregation that they had to contend with. The collapse of that movement flowed from Martin Luther King's and the SCLC's bankrupt, liberal pacifist program of reliance on the racist federal government and the Democratic Party. That is what crippled that struggle.

As a result of the inability of the liberal-led civil rights leadership to address the capitalist roots of black oppression, many black activists embraced a separatist road and rejected integrated class struggle, which is not only in the interest of blacks but is in the interest of the entire working class. The result was that the best of an entire generation of young black militants, particularly embodied in the contradictory radical-nationalist Black Panthers, was cut down through murderous FBI Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) repression, facilitated by murderous internal factionalism.

Some of this history is being revised in the anarchist milieu. You have, for instance, the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC). They recently had an article, "A Synthesis of Race & Class: A Look at the Black Panther Party & Its Goal of Liberation" (*Northeastern Anarchist*, Summer/Fall 2003). What the anarchists say is quite interesting because it indicates why their rejection of a Leninist vanguard party makes them incapable of understanding the fact that what really led to the demise of the Panthers was not simply FBI repression. It was not simply what the anarchists call the Panthers' "authoritarian, top-down structure" or their advocacy of a vanguard party (which was of course vanguard in name only, because there was male chauvinism within that organization). What NEFAC says is this:

> "The Black Panther Party was the most important revolutionary organization in America during the late 20th century.... [The party] was able to develop a truly revolutionary political platform that presented a more just and viable alternative....
>
> "Perhaps the party would have benefited and maximized its potential as a Revolutionary Black Nationalist organization by broadening its struggles to both remedial and immediate programs as well as more militant activities so long as they were both aimed at a common and revolutionary goal: the necessity for black people to gain control of the institutions in their own communities, eventually transforming them into cooperatives, and of one day working with other ethnic groups to change the system."

This petty-bourgeois rejection of the working class is exactly the Panthers' type of New Left sectoralism. Thoroughly anti-working-class, it is based upon the utopian, classless notion of a "black community," or "black communities," which are really impoverished ghettos. What are you going to control? The Panthers were nationalists; they were radical nationalists. They wanted social revolution, but they rejected mobilizing the integrated working class to sweep away this system. This is the key reason for their political demise. It wasn't simply that the state was all-powerful. There was sympathy among white workers in the Bay Area. In the early 1970s we had supporters who worked in a General Motors auto plant in Fremont, California. This was a factory where the Panthers briefly had a caucus, which they later liquidated.

Today, the effects of the destruction of the Panthers' organization and the defeats of the movement are deeply felt. The black population is leaderless. Under the conditions of relentless racist attacks today in the name of the "war against terror" at home and abroad, it is vital to know who our friends and who our enemies are. Things didn't have to turn out this way. If you really look at the road forward, it has to be based on this program of class-struggle revolutionary integrationism, by forging a revolutionary workers party that tells the bitter truth. In that regard, we have to clear the ground of the reformist and centrist obstacles that block the road to power.

Don't be fooled by the occasional socialist rhetoric. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) is a good example of what we're talking about. Time and again, they stand with the Democrats against workers and the oppressed. On 23 October 1999, they were out there in the rally organized by Sharpton to defend the Klan's right to march. He went to court on behalf of the Klan, whereas the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee, along with the Labor Black League, mobilized a mass labor-centered mobilization that stopped the Klan.

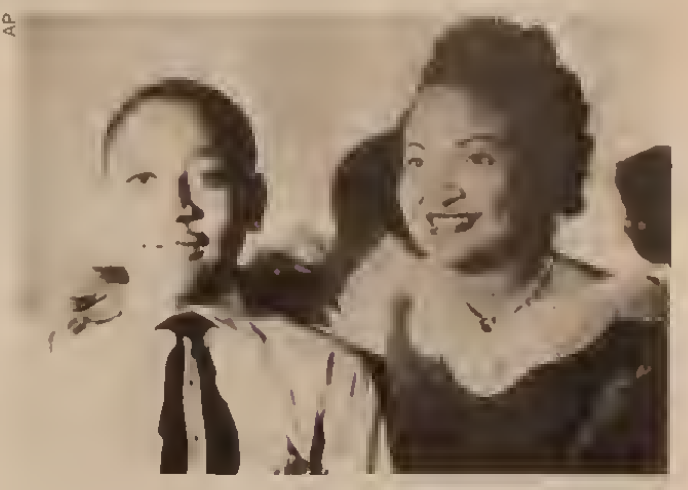
So what does the ISO say is the way forward? In a recent article called "Racism in America Today" (*International Socialist Review*, November-December 2003), they say that, despite the persistence of institutional racism in America,

> "It would be wrong, nevertheless, to conclude that things are just as bad as they were before the civil rights movement. Many of the legislative gains from that period—from affirmative action to ending segregation—are under attack. But the impact of the movement has been longstanding, fundamentally changing the attitudes and perceptions of millions of people about African Americans."

WV Photo

Ford River Rouge workers in 1976 national auto strike. Detroit was center of black proletarian militancy until Big Three auto bosses gutted industry while pro-capitalist UAW tops capitulated.

Where do you start, right? One thing to say is that the lie of black inferiority, the recrudescence of "scientific racism" in this *Bell Curve* book, which was a best-seller at the time it was published in 1994, which preached the genetic inferiority of black people, struck fertile soil. The point is that the civil rights movement failed to end black oppression because it was tied to the Democratic Party, and these fake socialists cover up that fact because they are busily tailing the Democrats today. There was nothing in that article about breaking with the Democratic Party. I think it is because the ISO's whole perspective is to reform this racist, capitalist system. And, of course, they supported every counterrevolutionary nationalist movement, every anti-Soviet struggle in the past, which culminated in the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state.



AP

Emmett Till and his mother. The lynching of this 14-year-old black youth in Mississippi in 1955 for the alleged "crime" of whistling at a white woman helped fuel civil rights movement.

So their program is very illustrative of what we are dealing with out there. We have so-called socialists in this country who practically ignore the growing resegregation of the U.S. In the case of the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), they actually openly champion segregation—for example, opposing school busing in Boston. Their virulent hostility to integration is no accident since they are virulently Stalinophobic, anti-Soviet. Rejecting defense of the gains of the Russian Revolution led to accommodation to American imperialism at home on the strategic question for proletarian revolution in the U.S., the fight for black liberation.

The kind of "integration" that the ruling class is interested in aims to recruit the best of those minorities whose skills and training can be utilized to defend the capitalists' interests at home and abroad. This involves being able to intervene into countries with large non-white populations, sitting astride regions where there is oil, gold, diamonds and the like. So the white ruling class will drop the color bar to get a Colin Powell and a Condoleezza Rice to do their bidding in enslaving and murdering thousands of dark-skinned peoples, and other oppressed peoples, around the world. This has nothing to do, of course, with the obliteration of the color line, but rather the obliteration of horribly impoverished people around the world. So the class enemy has a consistently counterrevolutionary strategy and program, and we have to have a consistently revolutionary strategy and program.

If you want another example, look at the support from sections of the U.S. officer corps for retaining affirmative action at the University of Michigan last year. Why? They remember their long, losing and dirty colonial war against Vietnam—which was conducted with a racially torn military. Now, they have a Hispanic commander leading troops in Iraq.

The bourgeoisie wants "integration" insofar as it furthers their struggle for unbridled exploitation. We defend affirmative action as one of the remaining minimal and very inadequate gains of the civil rights movement, which were wrested from the white ruling class in struggle. However, affirmative action does not and cannot attack the race and class biases inherent in this system. In the universities, we fight for open admissions, free tuition and a fully paid state stipend, especially to enable minority and working-class youth to attend those schools. Very recently, the Spartacus Youth Club mobilized actions at Columbia University against an anti-affirmative action "bake sale" sponsored by the Conservative Club, which is in caboots with an assortment of sinister racist imperialist elements, such as the pro-slavery ideologue David Horowitz. The Conservative Club had in their cross hairs blacks, Jews, Hispanics, gays and others. We mobilized against their racist provocation at Columbia while organizations like the ISO refused to endorse the SYC-initiated action because they were basically trying to pressure the administration to defend minority students.

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

We fight to build a vanguard party that bases its program not upon the current consciousness of the working class, but upon its objective interests, its interests as a conscious revolutionary class. This is really the hallmark of what we're fighting for, a party that is a tribune of the people. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, the workers of Russia smashed the outmoded capitalist system. This was the first and the only successful workers revolution in history. Today, U.S. imperialism is seeking to destroy the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states in China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. Despite the political misrule of the Stalinist bureaucracies in these countries, the smashing of capitalism there is a good thing for the workers internationally. We Trotskyists unconditionally defend those workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. It's a good thing that North Korea has nukes. Otherwise, the U.S. imperialist bandits would have obliterated them a long time ago. We fight for workers political revolution in those countries to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracies whose anti-internationalist, anti-working-class program facilitates the

continued on page 10

Ernest Richie Collection

Blacks in Baton Rouge, LA, organize boycott of segregated city buses, 1953.

Black Liberation...

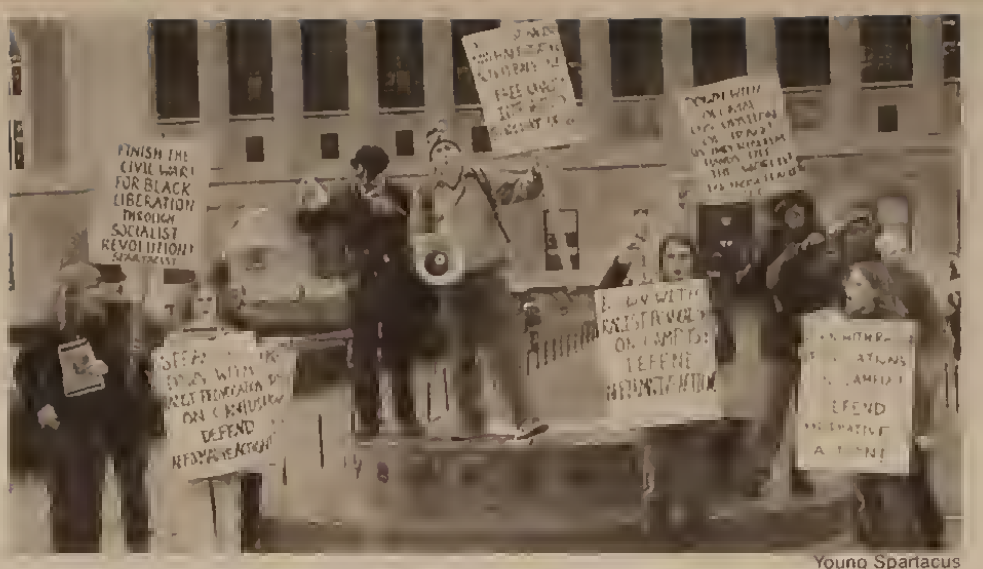
(continued from page 9)

imperialist drive toward capitalist restoration. To be a Marxist, a Trotskyist, a fighter for world revolution, you have to be a proletarian internationalist. Our task here is to build that revolutionary Trotskyist party and finish what the Bolsheviks started in 1917 by fighting for new October Revolutions.

The class-struggle program for black liberation is directly tied to the struggle for proletarian revolution. In this regard, every generation comes to revolutionary consciousness in their own way. My personal road was tortuous, starting as a follower of the petty-bourgeois radical-nationalist Frantz Fanon, who seemed to be offering an uncompromising assault on the citadel of racism and imperialism—looking for the "wretched of the earth" to rise up spontaneously to drive off the imperialists. Only when I joined the Spartacist League did I learn that Fanon's "radical" nationalism was an expression of the prevalent New Leftism which propagated the myth that the working class was *not* the agent of revolutionary change, but had been "bought off" and integrated into the racist capitalist system. I'll skip some of the other delusions that I had to discard along the way.

We've learned a lot from the Bolsheviks. When you look at some of the history of what the Spartacist League has fought for, such as the struggle for busing in Boston, it is really important to see how we swam against the stream. I was fortunate to spend some time with Dick Fraser, along with other comrades, in Los Angeles in the early 1980s. We tried to assist him in various ways—he was a very sick man at the time. We had one friend in common, a guy by the name of Earl Ofari [Hutchinson], who was a friend of mine, and Dick had done some writing with him too. In the early 1970s, Ofari played a role in breaking me from the dead end of "revolutionary nationalism" and in telling me over and over again that a woman's work is never done. He wrote a useful book called *The Myth of Black Capitalism* which really assisted me in developing a class perspective.

We had a big argument in 1974-75 about the demand, which Ofari supported, that the government send federal troops to Boston to protect black schoolchildren, who had been bused to integrate schools in South Boston, a white enclave. At the same time, Ofari denounced the Maoist Revolutionary Union, the predecessors of today's Revolutionary Communist Party, which capitulated to the racist anti-busing forces in Boston and came out with an infamous headline in their press: "People Must Unite to Smash Boston Busing Plan" (*Revolution*, October 1974). This was a gross capitulation to the racist scum from the Nazis and the Klan to Louise Day Hicks, who was a leader of the racist outfit called ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights).



Young Spartacus

March 2004: SYC initiated protest demanding "Down With Racist Provocations on Campus!" and "Defend Affirmative Action!" at Columbia University.

Ofari's main fire, however, was directed at the so-called "sectarian" Spartacist League. We were in the forefront of fighting for mass integrated labor-black defense to defend the black schoolchildren against the howling racist mobs in South Boston. We fought for low-rent, racially integrated public housing, for quality integrated education for all, and for the implementation of busing and its extension to the suburbs as a minimal—although inadequate—step toward black equality. We weren't successful in getting the labor movement organized along those lines. However, this was in the interests of workers and the oppressed.

The trade-union misleaders in that city didn't lift a finger so as not to alienate the Democratic Party so-called "friends of labor," such as Teddy Kennedy and others. Initially, Kennedy made some mild support statements, and they ran his butt off the stage.

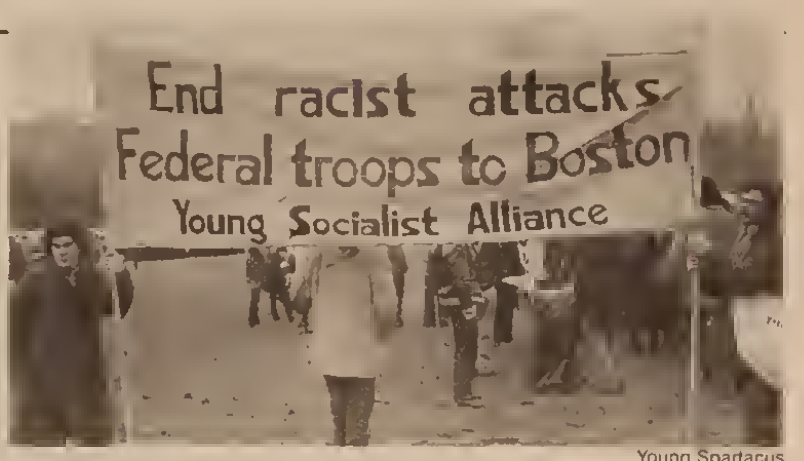
We linked this fight to the struggle for socialist revolution and a workers government. In contrast, the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) called for federal troops to "defend" black people and tailed behind the petty-bourgeois liberal NAACP. In pursuit of their class-collaborationist bloc with the liberals, the SWP sought to rewrite history by claiming that through mass pressure the armed forces of imperialism could be made to fight for the oppressed. They consciously distorted history to suit their reformist appetites. They tried to erase the indisputable fact that every time troops were called in, particularly in response to black rebellion, it was to suppress those who were fighting back. The capitalist state—its cops, its courts, its armed forces—is not neutral. These bodies are instruments of capitalist rule and racist repression. The Workers World Party of Sam Marcy was tailing behind this black Democrat, Bill Owen, who opposed busing and was looking for a political career. Marcy put out a pamphlet, *Busing and Self-Determination*, which should have been titled "The Right to Tailism." In it, they stated: "Separation or Assimilation—It's Up to the Oppressed." So they simultaneously tailed the petty-bourgeois liberals of the NAACP and the Black Muslims. They betrayed the struggle for black equality.

Finally, the fight against the resegregation of America cannot be separated from the unrelenting ruling-class offensive against labor and oppressed minorities, which has resulted in increased concentration of wealth at one end of society and increased segregation and misery at the other. The recent five-month-long, bitter, sold-out UFCW grocery workers strike in Southern California indicates that there are today thousands of workers determined to resist the capitalist attacks. They fought, and it was not impossible for them to have won. But the treacherous trade-union bureaucracy isolated that strike, refused to extend it nationwide and played by the bosses' rules. That's why we say you need a class-struggle leadership of labor to unleash its power. Such a leadership is based upon the recognition that the fight for the emancipation of the working class is inseparable from the struggle against the brutal, racist oppression that is endemic to this capitalist system.

How can this power be brought to bear? A powerful message would have been sent to the bloodsucking capitalists had there been ten thousand transit workers, hospital workers, city workers downing their tools to protest the racist killings of black woman unionist Alberta Spruill and black youth Timothy Stansbury. Or, a few years ago, Amadou Diallo. Or the several Latino youth killed by New York's "finest" racist killers. Or in defense of class-war prisoners such as Mumia Abu-Jamal. That social power must be mobilized. The capitalists would be forced to take notice if there were a significant presence of workers out there on behalf of women's rights—especially in the fight for abortion, which is under attack. The possibilities of integrated class struggle are palpable and, on a modest scale, very real. White, Latino and Asian workers were out there together on the picket lines during the recent UFCW strike. They fought, and their union wasn't broken, even though they were bitterly sold out.

How do we get that kind of leadership? By drawing the class line. By breaking with the program of class collaboration that preaches the lie of a "community of interests" between the workers and the bosses and of "lesser-evilism," which is pushed by the reformists and labor fakers. That party will be built by unmasking the enemies of the workers and the oppressed, no matter what their color or nationality is. A necessary task for the working class in this country is the forging of such a revolutionary workers party, a political weapon to advance a fight for jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, for free medical care, for free universal education, for full citizenship rights, for immigrant rights, for militant defense of the rights of gays. The fight for free abortion on demand, the fight for freedom of all class-war prisoners is a fight for a socialist America. And this fight will be realized through expropriating the capitalist class.

I want to end with this quote from a black youth in Roxbury, Boston; who was inspired by the struggle for integration in that city. It underscores one of the points that we've made, namely, that in the past, on most occasions, the black population has sought every opportunity to fight for integration and equality as opposed to opting for a separatist road. It is only in periods of defeat and out of despair that some have turned toward pseudo-nationalism. Reflecting the egalitarian sentiments of a significant number of black people in the civil rights era, an eleven-year-old black youth said: "Busing's just got to be, man. Got to be. We got it coming to us. We got to open up ourselves, spread out. Get into the city.... Go to good schools, live in good places like white folks got.... That's why they're busing us" (*Brown v. Board of Education* [2001]). To realize this dream of genuine equality, you must fight for a socialist revolution. You can't get it unless you have a party that swims against the stream and that bases itself upon the lessons of the class struggle and the fight to smash capitalism on a world scale.■



Young Spartacus

1974: Predecessor of today's Revolutionary Communist Party sided with white racist backlash against busing (above), while reformists of Socialist Workers Party youth group pushed illusions in federal troops to defend black children.

A. Radakov

1920 Soviet Russian poster reads: "He who is illiterate is like a blind man." Today SL/U.S. calls for free, quality integrated education for all.

Black History and the Class Struggle No. 2

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- **SNCC: "Black Power" and the Democrats**

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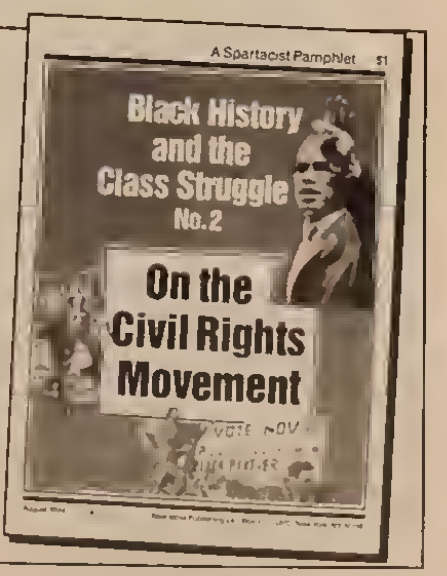

Fifty Years After *Brown v. Board of Education*

Public Education: A Promise Undelivered

We print below a presentation, slightly edited for publication, by a New York Labor Black League for Social Defense member at a Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club regional educational in New York City on April 3.

I was two weeks short of my fifteenth birthday when the Supreme Court handed down its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. Like most of my friends and family, I received the news with tremendous excitement. I had been raised to revere the Supreme Court and to have an almost biblical faith in the Constitution. This decision confirmed the lessons of my youth.

Fifty years later the promise of *Brown* remains undelivered. I have spent 36 of those years as a teacher, working primarily with American black and immigrant adult students. I have learned a great deal, but the most vivid lesson of all is how public education supports the system of exploitation and racism that holds down the entire working class.

In the late 1960s and '70s, a wealth of haphazardly constituted adult literacy programs, established in the wake of the ghetto uprisings as part of the "war on poverty," proliferated in the city. The funding was unstable: teachers were underpaid, overworked and without benefits. Classroom space was often miserable, the teaching materials paltry, and the management deplorable. Despite these conditions, students flocked to classes in storefronts and social service agencies in Harlem, Bed-Stuy, Bushwick and South Jamaica: immigrants, refugees, African Americans, the working poor, school dropouts and welfare mothers. Waiting lists were full and classroom space scarce. The funding served less than half the number of students who needed to learn how to read or learn English. There was, however, a vibrant energy to the classes.

During the next decade or so the struggle to make adult literacy a right continued, and the competition for funding became increasingly fierce. Enter Democrat Bill Clinton and his program to "end welfare as we know it." Within a year, hundreds of welfare recipients, mainly women, who were the mainstay of the afternoon adult classes, were herded into workfare programs where they got minimal instruction in language and reading. Instead they were taught how to write résumés, how to dress for an interview, and (I kid you not) how to be humble on the job. Forced into these programs, many students were sent to work in dead-end jobs at less than minimum pay. Unknowingly, many of them were sent to jobs that belonged to workers who were on leave and had the right to reclaim their positions when they returned. They worked without medical benefits or workmen's compensation in dangerous situations, and worst of all, some of them were sent to scab during the Service Employees (SEIU) Local 32B-32J strike in the winter of 1995-96—all to the deafening silence of the unions. The communications workers, AFSCME DC37 and the United Federation of Teachers did get some of their workfare workers unionized, but for the most part the unions turned their backs on these workers, abandoning any form of struggle to remedy their deplorable working conditions. We in the Labor Black Leagues, a fraternal organization of the Spartacist League, call for an integrated, revolutionary program to fight the rising tide of slave labor.

UPI

Little Rock, 1957: Black student jeered by rabid white mob as she enters Central High School.

But the exploitation of welfare workers was only part of the growing bipartisan assault on social welfare and literacy programs. I worked for seven years with a program designed to provide a safe haven for students who had dropped out of the public schools. Supported by a network of counseling services provided by community-based organizations funded by the NYC Department of Employment, classes were run for young men and women, overwhelmingly black and Hispanic, between the ages of 17 to 24. Prominent among these youth were the students who were recruited through the VERA Institute of Justice to attend school as an alternative to incarceration. By the mid '90s, the funds for the community-based organizations had been eliminated, leaving the school without a systematic means of recruitment or support. As a result, many of these young people found themselves back on the streets or left to face prison sentences. When this program, along with other alternative programs, was forced out of its school building in 1999, "the administration of the Board of Education and CUNY [City University of New York] showed little interest in finding them new space. To quote an administrator in the office of the Deputy Chancellor: "I haven't much interest in youth returning to school. They should have done it right the first time."

In racist capitalist America, the education of black youth is inextricably tied to the job market. In a sagging economy, with more and more jobs being exported, minority and immigrant youth have become an increasingly expendable population. As *WV* pointed out in "Desperation, Segregation and the 'Ebonics' Controversy," (*WV* No. 660, 24 January 1997):

Kamber/NY Times

Kennedy High, NYC: High school students in America's ghettos today are subjected to humiliating searches, prison-like conditions.

"The capitalist rulers invest only as much as they can realize back in profit when it comes to the education of those they exploit."

Today the New York State Education Department estimates that about 30 percent of the population of New York reads below a fifth grade level. In New York City alone about two million people need reading classes, and many more need ESL (English as a second language), but the number of students being served has dropped from approximately 50,000 15 years ago to approximately 25,000 today.

And what kind of curriculum does the state offer the students who attend these classes? During the civil rights movement, there were many legitimate demands to include material from black and immigrant history and literature that had been missing from the curriculum. What became known as "multiculturalism," however, took a strange turn. It often meant that students were taught nothing outside of their cultural experience. When I found a text of Russian short stories hidden in the back of a closet, I was told that the young welfare mothers I was teaching would understand the stories in *No Hot Water Tonight*, a popular text in the basic literacy classroom, much better because it was closer to their experience. When a young man in one of my classes complained that he was tired of reading books about life in the "hood" and would like to read something different, we could find very little variety in the book room. By this standard of instruction, the only books that I should have read in school would have been *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Portnoy's Complaint* or *Marjorie Morningstar*.

To assume that students can only understand the things that are in the narrowest scope of their experience is both patronizing and racist. There is more than one way to keep people in the ghetto or the barrio. Indeed, there are some good programs initiated by educators, such as the American Social History Project whose text on the Civil War, *Freedom's Unfinished Revolution*, I have found very useful. You can walk into high school classrooms and see pictures of Mumia Abu-Jamal or Huey Newton plastered on the wall, giving the appearance that some kind of political discussion is taking place, but none of this translates into real education as long as teachers are forced to prepare students to pass standardized tests like the Regents or the High School Equivalency Exam (GED) which only assess students' knowledge of material that is limited to approved texts, all of which are super-patriotic, and which determine who graduates. That is why a class-struggle leadership of labor to get rid of the political cops of the ruling class is essential.

Limiting the curriculum is not the only way in which students are denied full entry into the educational system. After a

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Library of Congress

Southern school for freed slaves during Radical Reconstruction. It took the Civil War to establish public education for black people in America.

Venezuela...

(continued from page 1)

on any kind of social revolution or even basic structural reforms. They are entirely dependent on the vicissitudes of the world market prices for oil. As the research department of the Wall Street investment bank of J.P. Morgan commented, "The strength of oil prices is allowing the [Chávez] government to maintain an expansionary fiscal policy that would be unsustainable otherwise" (London *Financial Times*, 13 August).

At the same time, the Chávez regime has perpetuated the reactionary influence of the Catholic church on social questions like gay rights and abortion. When Chávez's 1999 Constitution was initially proposed, it originally contained language against discrimination of homosexuals. But under pressure from the church, such language was removed. Meanwhile, abortion remains illegal in Venezuela.

Chávez's defeat of the recall referendum was welcomed as a guarantor of "stability" by such mouthpieces of imperialism as the London *Financial Times* and the *New York Times*. In the lead-up to the referendum, oil giants ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco signed agreements to invest billions in Venezuela. In turn, Chávez's victory was enthusiastically cheered by a broad spectrum of ostensible socialists around the world. What accounts for this seemingly contradictory base of support? Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many leftists have imbibed the "death of communism" ideology, concluding that the only hope is to fight for reforms and thus prettify forces that are only seeking to rescue capitalist rule and enhance the exploitation of the working people. In Venezuela, these leftists help mask Chávez's leadership of the capitalist state as a "revolution" by the working people and poor.

Workers World Party organized pro-Chávez protests outside Venezuelan consulates in the U.S. where Venezuelans cast absentee ballots in the referendum. The front page of *Workers World* (August 19) screamed, "Venezuelans Mobilize to Defend Revolution." But Hugo Chávez and his "Bolivarian revolution" (named for nineteenth-century bourgeois nationalist Simón Bolivar) rule Venezuela on behalf of local capitalism and foreign imperialist investors. As such, Hugo Chávez is a class enemy of the workers and the oppressed.

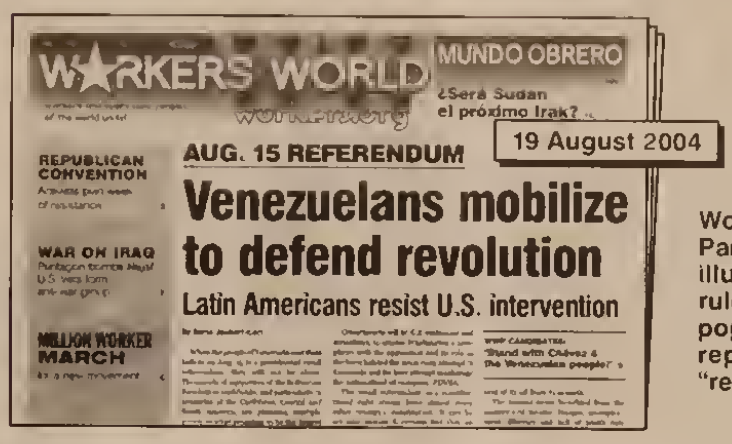
Although the International Communist League does not have a section in Venezuela at this time, our aim is to stake out a position to clear the theoretical obstacles in the path of present and future struggles. We state that the working class had no way to express its own interests in the Venezuelan recall election: a "yes" vote would be a de facto bloc with the CIA and its local lieutenants; a "no" vote would amount to political support to the capitalist Chávez regime. As there was no means to express the crucial need for the political independence of the working class from the bourgeois state in this referendum, abstention was the only choice for revolutionaries.

Wide World

Ricardo López Hevia/Granma

Left: Milltiaman guards formerly American oil refinery, expropriated by Cuban Revolution in 1960. Right: One ot 17,000 Cuban doctors and dentists who today provide tree medical care to Venezuela's poor.

Had there been a rightist military coup against the Chávez regime, as there was in 2002, we would have sought to mobilize the working class in military defense of Chávez while politically opposing his regime. The classic historical precedent for Marxists is Spain 1936 when a right-wing military coup, led by General Francisco Franco, attempted to overthrow the Popular Front government, a coalition of the Socialist and Communist parties with a handful of bourgeois liberals. The heroic and spontaneous mobilization of the Spanish working class beat back the coup attempt, leading to a prolonged civil war. As Trotsky declared at the time, to be victorious the workers had to break with the Popular Front government, a form of bourgeois rule: "It is only necessary to seriously and courageously advance the program of the socialist revolution" ("The Lesson of Spain" [July 1936]). While the Chávez regime in Venezuela is a bourgeois-populist, not a popular-front, government, a U.S.-backed military coup aimed at toppling it would necessarily pose the defense of the organizations of the working class and plebeian masses.



Workers World Party promotes illusion that the rule of capitalist populist Chávez represents a "revolution."

The immediate perspective that is urgently posed is not only to oppose U.S. imperialist incursions into Venezuela and elsewhere, but to fight to shatter the support of the workers movement to either Chávez or the opposition, and to forge a revolutionary internationalist workers party to lead the working class to power. This requires an intransigent fight against nationalism in Venezuela, which obscures class divisions in the country. Only the victorious struggle for working-class rule, i.e., socialist revolution throughout the Americas, will ensure land to the landless and enable the oil workers and other proletarians to enjoy the wealth created by their labor.

Chávez: A Bonapartist Strongman

Chávez and U.S. imperialism have a symbiotic relationship. Venezuela supplies 14 percent of U.S. oil imports and is the principal source of oil for refineries in the Gulf of Mexico. Chávez has kept the oil pumps flowing to the U.S. throughout the Iraq war (despite his verbal opposition to the U.S. war) and pays the foreign debt to the imperialist bankers. Venezuela depends on the U.S. market for two-thirds of its oil exports which generate 75 percent of the country's export earnings and half the government's revenues. In turn, bogged down with an Iraq occupation going badly, certain circles among America's imperialist rulers see a stable source of oil from Venezuela as more important than removing Chávez.

With hunger riots in Argentina still fresh in mind and a deep economic crisis throughout Latin America, Venezuela's oil windfall and the entanglement of U.S. imperialism in Iraq allow Chávez to posture as an "anti-imperialist" strongman in America's backyard. Along with recent popular upheavals in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, Chávez's defeat of the recall referendum is another indication of a political-ideological shift in the climate away from "neoliberalism" to nationalist populism in the region. As we wrote at the time of the Argentine economic crisis which ignited mass protests and strikes in "Behind the Global Capitalist Recession" (Part Two, *WV* No. 768, 9 November 2001):

> "However, such a shift in the political climate and balance of forces is not in itself anti-capitalist. In a sense, it would strengthen the forces of capitalism, in Latin America by recementing the ties of the working class to its own national bourgeoisie, which is well practiced in demagogic denunciations of Wall Street and Washington."

Nationalist populism and economic neoliberalism are merely alternative policies of the same capitalist rule, often pursued by one and the same individual, as dictated by the exigencies of the moment. Thus former workers' leader Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva of Brazil abruptly dropped his populist rhetoric to embrace a $30 billion IMF bailout package and has enforced austerity on the masses as part of the deal, while sending Brazilian troops to police devastated Haiti. Leftists who yesterday were gaga for "Lula" now drop his coattails to climb on the Chávez bandwagon. In so doing, they help prepare future defeats for the workers and peasants of Venezuela.

Like Peronism in Argentina or the rule and institutions established by Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico in the 1930s, Chávez, a former colonel who led a failed military coup in 1992, is what Marxists call a bonapartist ruler. The term refers to a regime usually headed by a strongman, typically a (former) military leader (like the original Napoleon Bonaparte), which in a period of crisis or stalemate between the irreconcilably opposing class forces of labor and capital elevates itself to a position of "leader of the nation," seemingly above competing class interests. In Argentina and Mexico, such bonapartist rule was combined with corporatism, whereby political, social and even trade-union organizations are directly tied to the state.

In fact, the current bourgeois opposition in Venezuela includes Democratic Action (AD), which began as a bourgeois-populist party and dominated Venezuelan bourgeois politics for decades. Moving to stave off labor unrest, the AD government in 1945-46 was able to extract substantial concessions from the oil companies to the benefit of oil workers. This resulted not only in the creation of a labor aristocracy among the oil proletariat, but also gave AD control of the vast majority of oil unions in the country.

Revolutionary Marxist leader Leon Trotsky analyzed why bonapartist rule frequently occurs in countries that have "skipped stages," i.e., where there was no bourgeois revolution and socio-economic modernization before the rise of imperialism as a stage of capitalist development. Although these societies, like any other capitalist society, are divided into three classes—the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie—the national bourgeoisie is weak and, in fear of the proletariat, serves as dependent agents for foreign imperialism. In a transcript of a 1938 discussion with Trotsky, then in exile in Mexico, titled "Latin American Problems: A Transcript," Trotsky said:

> "We see in Mexico and the other Latin American countries that they skipped over most stages of the development. It began in Mexico directly by incorporating the trade unions in the state. In Mexico we have a double domination. That is, foreign capital and the national bourgeoisie, or, as Diego Rivera formulated it, a 'sub-bourgeoisie'—a stratum which is controlled by foreign capital and at the same time opposed to the workers; in Mexico a semi-Bonapartist regime between foreign capital and national capital, foreign capital and the workers.
>
> "Every government can create in a case like this a position of oscillation, of inclination [tilting or leaning] one time to the national bourgeoisie or workers and another time to foreign capital. In order to have the workers in their hands, they incorporated the trade unions in the state."

In Venezuela, the Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela (CTV—

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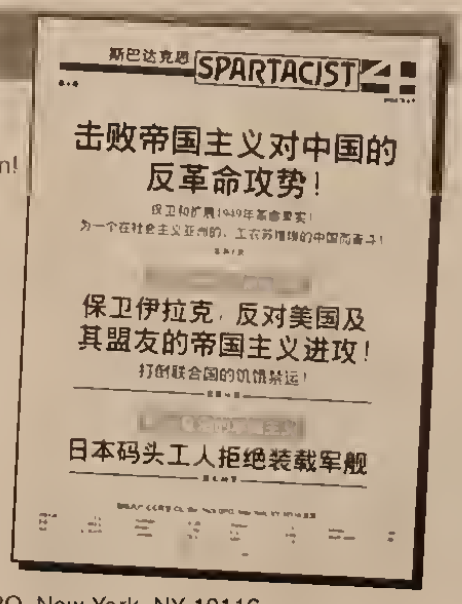

Venezuelan Workers Confederation) is subordinated to the bourgeoisie's Fedecámaras (Chamber of Commerce) through the political domination of AD over the CTV. Following a three-day strike in 2000 by oil workers affiliated to the CTV, Chávez introduced a union-busting national referendum on whether existing unions should undergo a "re-legitimation" process. The CTV called for a boycott and only about 25 percent of the country's electorate participated. A necessary step in the evolution of any bourgeois populist regime must be to attempt to bring the unions to heel. Chávez has sought to do this by either co-opting workers organizations or crushing them through repression, or some combination of the two. When a majority of CTV candidates won in the "re-legitimation" elections, Chávez then threw his support to a new, rival union federation, the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT—National Workers Union). Many union leaders within the UNT see defense of the Chávez government as the central axis of their formation. The future of the UNT will be no different than the CTV so long as the UNT remains subordinated to the bourgeoisie through its alliance with Chávez.

To advance the struggles of the workers in Venezuela and for the labor movement to champion the rights of all the oppressed, the rural toilers, the unemployed, women and the youth, it is essential to fight for the complete and unconditional independence of all the trade unions from the capitalist state and bourgeois parties. This means a fight to turn the trade unions into organs of class struggle and not machines in the service of bourgeois-nationalist rulers and imperialism's satraps.

"Death of Communism" Leftists Tail Chávez

Close ties between Castro's Cuba and Venezuela are a thorn in the side of America's rulers. But both Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez are opposed to the fight for social revolution in Venezuela or elsewhere. In the late 1970s-early 1980s, when a civil war raged in El Salvador and the left-wing Sandinistas toppled the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, Castro advised against following the "Cuban road"—i.e., he advised against the expropriation of the capitalist class and the overthrow of capitalist rule. Castro thus contributed to the subsequent defeat of the Salvadoran insurgency by the U.S.-backed military regime and the eventual toppling of the Sandinistas as a result of U.S. economic warfare and support to the contra terrorists.

This has only emboldened the American imperialists to tighten the noose around Cuba with the imperialist blockade. We Trotskyists fight for unconditional military defense of the Cuban deformed workers state against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. Our perspective is to forge a Trotskyist party to lead a political revolution against Stalinist misrule in Cuba and to implant the revolutionary internationalist perspective of Bolshevism and the fight for revolution throughout the Americas.

It must be precisely because Chávez has no intention of carrying out a social revolution that the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) called for "unconditional military defense of the Chávez regime" ("U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!" *Proletarian Revolution*, Spring 2004). Vehemently opposed to the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense to any and every workers state, where capitalist rule was overthrown, the LRP invokes the slogan...to defend the capitalist Chávez regime without condition—i.e., giving Chávez a blank check.

The LRP has historically refused to defend the workers states on the false premise that they are "state capitalist." Well, Trotsky wrote that bonapartist regimes like Cárdenas' in Mexico "create a state capitalism which has nothing to do with socialism. It is the purest form of state capitalism" ("Latin American Problems: A Transcript"). Now, irony of ironies, the LRP reserves the call of "unconditional military defense" for the "Cárdenas-lite" bonapartist regime of Chávez!

A more credible argument is presented by the Mexican Liga de Trabajadores por el Socialismo (LTS—Workers League for Socialism), which originated from the tendency of the late Nahuel Moreno, an Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist who was an ardent supporter of bourgeois-populist general Juan Perón, who ruled Argentina in the 1940s and '50s. In an article on

Marxist.com

Chávez glad-hands Alan Woods of pseudo-Trotskyist International Marxist Tendency in Caracas earlier this year.

the recall referendum (13 August), the LTS states: "The Chávez leadership can only bring defeat and frustration to the Venezuelan masses. Unfortunately, most of the left capitulates to him, bestowing political support more or less shamefacedly, which only serves to impede the proletarian vanguard from regrouping around independent working-class politics." These fine words serve to camouflage the operational conclusion drawn by the LTS: "Vote NO critically, a NO to the opposition and to imperialism, which in no way means a 'YES' to Chávez." Thus when the ballots were counted, all the LTS rhetoric notwithstanding, their position and their vote were to maintain Chávez in office, helping to recement the ties between Venezuela's working people and the Chávez regime. The LTS is a very good example of centrism: revolutionary in words, opportunist in deeds.

Hugo Chávez does not even pretend to be a Marxist. That ruse is for the ostensible socialists who support him. None are more fawning than the International Marxist Tendency (IMT). British IMT leader Alan Woods has been wined and dined by Chávez. Chávez quotes from Woods' book, *Reason in Revolt*, on his weekly television broadcast, *Aló Presidente*. IMT members in Venezuela threw themselves into promoting Chávez, guided by Woods' oddly messianic adulation of the strongman: "He alone has dared to confront the power of the oligarchy and defy the might of American imperialism." This is reminiscent of what pseudo-Trotskyist groups in Argentina have argued, that it was correct to have supported Perón, otherwise you would be supporting "the oligarchy."

The IMT is taken to task for "over egging the pudding" in their adulation of Chávez by the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI). A lengthy CWI polemic, "Revolutionary socialists and the Venezuelan revolution," (21 June) waxes orthodox against the IMT's capitulation to bourgeois-nationalist forces. Nonetheless, the CWI then goes on to advise Chávez on how he should have responded to the referendum, to the point of criticizing Chávez for not organizing workers militias and committees rather than agree to the referendum. The CWI writes:

> "Chávez agreed to proceed with the referendum arguing that he will win it and it will strengthen the legitimacy of his regime. This was an incorrect policy in our opinion.... Rather than accept this result it would have been far better to strengthen the community organisations and build workers' elected councils, to link these up locally, on a citywide basis, regionally and nationally and go onto the offensive. Together with rank and file committees of the soldiers these bodies should establish an armed workers' militia and take the necessary step to take the revolution forward and overthrow capitalism."

In the same article cited above, the CWI writes, "It remains to be seen if Chávez actually proceeds to undertake the arming of the working class and the general population," thus pushing the deadly illusion that Chávez and the capitalist state would ever arm the working class. Such deadly illusions have been pushed in the past by leftists with disastrous results, for example, in Chile in 1970, when the Socialist leader Salvador Allende was elected president as head of a Popular Front coalition. As a condition for taking office, Allende pledged to the Chilean bourgeoisie and its American imperialist protectors that he would appoint no military or police officers who had not been trained in the established academies and, moreover, would prohibit the formation of workers or other popular militias. We warned at the time: "Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready" ("Chilean Popular Front," *Spartacist* No. 19, November-December 1970). And three years later that is exactly what happened.

Notwithstanding the CWI's criticisms of the IMT, the premise of the CWI is *not* that Chávez is a bourgeois politician and therefore the class enemy of the working class and oppressed, but that he has simply not gone far enough in his "revolution." Rejecting the struggle to build a revolutionary workers party, both the CWI and IMT (which until 1991 were one organization) are characterized by liquidation into and promotion of social-democratic and bourgeois-nationalist forces.

Hugo Chávez is a lot more frank about his aims than the craven leftists who capitulate to him. In an interview with Tariq Ali (*CounterPunch*, 16 August) Chávez explained:

> "I don't believe in the dogmatic postulates of Marxist revolution. I don't accept that we are living in a period of proletarian revolutions. All that must be revised. Reality is telling us that every day. Are we aiming in Venezuela today for the abolition of private property or a classless society? I don't think so.... Try and make your revolution, go into combat, advance a little, even if it's only a millimetre, in the right direction, instead of dreaming about utopias."

The basic premise of all the left groups —from Workers World Party to the IMT and CWI—that to one degree or another support the Chávez regime or prettify it is that the anti-imperialist rhetoric and reforms are a step toward socialism, a sort of modern variant of the Menshevik/Stalinist schema of "two-stage revolution" (the first stage being a bourgeois-democratic revolution and the second stage, in the never-to-be future, being a socialist revolution). But both Marxist principle and all historical evidence have demonstrated that the tying of the working class and its organizations to any bourgeois ruler only serves to impede independent working-class struggle, and sets up the proletariat and its allies for slaughter by the bourgeoisie. In the case of Venezuela and Chávez, this would be posed when either Chávez turns on the workers and poor (for example, if oil revenues substantially drop) or when the Chávez regime is overthrown by more rightist forces. In opposition to such left groups, Marxists seek to prepare the Venezuelan working class to effectively combat the murderous forces of bourgeois reaction, whether carried out by Chávez or his bourgeois opponents.

By historical standards, Hugo Chávez is not a particularly radical left bourgeois nationalist either in terms of his ideological posture or actual reforms. During the Cold War era, many left bourgeois nationalists, like Egypt's Nasser or Algeria's FLN, claimed to be carrying out some kind of "socialist" program or transformation. Even Mexico's Lázaro Cárdenas nationalized the oil industry and made significant land distributions to the peasantry in the 1930s. The subordination of the working class to Cárdenas resulted in more than 60 years of corporatism and the shackling of the proletariat to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the bourgeois ruling party until 2000. And if one looks at the living conditions of working people and the oppressed in countries like Mexico today, you can plainly see the limitations of even the most radical bourgeois nationalists. In the wake of the destruction of the Soviet Union, ostensibly Marxist organizations that have always tailed left bourgeois nationalists are today reduced to promoting nationalist politicians who openly repudiate any socialist pretensions.

Authentic communists struggle to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties throughout Latin America, and this means a determined struggle against bourgeois nationalism which serves as the "glue" binding workers to their "own" rulers. Chávez's "Bolivarian revolution" is an appeal to anti-U.S. Latin American nationalism. But as one of the founding documents of Trotsky's Fourth International, "Thesis on the World Role of American Imperialism" (1938) underlined: "Only a union of the Latin American peoples striving towards the goal of a United Socialist America and allied in struggle with the revolutionary proletariat of the United States would represent a force strong enough to contend successfully with North American imperialism."

It is only the working class that has the social power to end the rule of the foreign imperialists and their local lackeys. Key to the survival of a workers revolution in Venezuela is its international extension to the rest of Latin America, particularly into Mexico and Brazil, and into the imperialist United States itself. This is the perspective of permanent revolution for which we of the Spartacist League/U.S. and our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, sections of the International Communist League, fight. ■

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Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

charms out more cover-up "investigations" of the Abu Ghraib torture chamber, new horrors are coming to light. "Keep them standing," was the order at a Marine-run jail in Iraq called "Camp Whitehorse," where a 52-year-old detainee, Nagem Sadoon Hatab, was beaten to death because he wouldn't or couldn't keep standing. According to a report of the court-martial of Marines involved, in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* (28 August), Hatab had six broken ribs and a broken hyoid bone in his neck when he was found dead, naked, curled in a fetal position, in the prison's yard. Marines violently beat Hatab and claimed he fell into some razor wire, then dragged him by the neck, stripped him and left him to die.

When U.S. rulers first launched the war against Iraq, they claimed to be fighting to bring "freedom" to the oppressed Shi'ite and Kurdish people. But as the occupation, with all its savage atrocities, marches on, so does increased resistance to it, including by Shi'ite clerical leaders. Now, the U.S. portrays the likes of al-Sadr as nothing more than terrorists and barbaric religious fanatics. But it should be noted that al-Sadr and his allies recently intervened to free a kidnapped American journalist, Micah Garen, because of his work documenting the looting of Iraqi antiquities from 5,000-year-old archeological sites near Nasiriya, while the Taliban—Wahhabi extremists of Sunni Islam and the erstwhile allies of the U.S.—destroyed irreplaceable ancient Buddhist statues in Afghanistan in 2001, claiming they were an "affront" to Islam.

The seething hatred for the arrogant occupiers could again explode into open military conflict at any time. But our call for military defense of those who take up arms against the occupation is by no means a blanket endorsement of the so-called "Iraqi resistance"—we oppose the murderous communal violence against other religious, ethnic and national groupings, the terrorist bombings which wantonly blow up innocent civilians, the kidnappings and execution of foreign civilian workers.

The once-powerful Iraqi Communist Party—with its strong secular traditions—was smashed decades ago by the Ba'athists in league with the U.S. imperialists. And today, with the devastation of war and occupation, and after more than 12 years of murderous United Nations sanctions, the Iraqi economy is in ruins, with unemployment at 70 percent. Nonetheless, it is urgently necessary to fight to forge Marxist workers parties in Iraq and throughout the region. Capitalism can never equitably resolve the democratic rights of the peoples of Iraq and the Near East—the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples as well as the Kurds.

Reuters

U.S. military forces devastate Najat in fighting against insurgents led by Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr.

Shi'ites, Sunnis and others. Liberation and justice can only come with the overthrow of bourgeois rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East, as part of the fight for international socialist revolution.

The subjugated Iraqi masses face the same racist and union-busting enemy faced by working people and the oppressed in the United States. It is in the class interests of the multiracial American proletariat to fight for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq. In Iraq, the struggle against the American occupation must be combined with a struggle against all forms of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism. As we wrote last issue, "While making clear that the main enemy is U.S. imperialism, a revolutionary party with roots and influence in Iraq today would mobilize against the reimposition of *sharia* [Islamic law], against communalist sectarian attacks, for organizing the vestiges of the workers movement and the legions of the unemployed on a class basis through strikes and workplace occupations against the thieving imperialist occupiers and parasitic clerics." ***U.S. out of Iraq now! Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution!*** ■

Education...

(continued from page 11)

long and bitter struggle, the fight for open admissions was won at the City University. Practically overnight, this nearly all-white university became racially mixed, producing black engineers, teachers and other professionals. But almost as soon as it became fully integrated, this university, which had been free during the Spanish-American War, the two world wars and the Great Depression, started imposing tuition fees on its students.

The tuition hikes started under Democrat Mario Cuomo's administration. By 1995, the tuition had grown high enough to provoke several thousand students and teachers from all the campuses to converge in protest at City Hall. As the protests continued to flare up on the campuses during the weeks that followed the rally, Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds began to bring reprisals against those students who led the protests. The Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the union at CUNY, supported Chancellor Reynolds in her persecution of protesters. Support for open admissions is not even on the radar screen in unions like the UFT and PSC. In its revolutionary ten-point program the LBL calls for the universities to be free and open to all.

At every turn of the road, black and immigrant students find themselves being turned back from the city's major colleges. Instead of mobilizing labor on behalf of black rights, the unions have tied themselves to the ruling class through their allegiance to the Democratic Party. The teachers union has put the preponderance of its efforts into securing school safety. They have aided and abetted the capitalist rulers by making the schools look like correctional institutions. This means increasing the presence of police and metal detectors. Both students and teachers have a right to attend safe schools, but to students who are harried and hounded on a daily basis by police, to students who are warehoused in dead-end special classes for minor infractions and often deemed deviant, turning the schools into prisons can only increase their sense of alienation and despair.

I am no longer surprised that the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education* never materialized. It is as important to the capitalists to control and restrict the level of literacy among the black population as it is for them to control the flow of guns into the inner city. It is worth remembering that it was during the height of the abolitionist movement that the prohibitions against slaves learning to read were solidified in slave codes. The slave masters were well aware that literate men like Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner had led the major slave rebellions. This fear exists today. Why else would the capitalist rulers have framed up Geronimo ji-Jaga (Pratt), a decorated Vietnam veteran and military strategist, and Mumia Abu-Jamal, a prize-winning journalist? Pratt was released when overwhelming evidence was produced to exonerate him; equally cogent evidence has surfaced on behalf of Jamal, but he remains in prison. What a threat this super-articulate black man must be to the state.

Where does one turn for racial justice? To the Supreme Court or the Constitution? That is what the school system promotes. Courses like "The Constitution Works" are typical of the staff development that is offered to teachers. But the Constitution to which they turn is also the document that was written to enshrine slavery. I might also point out that it is the same document that restricted voting rights to white males of property. It took a long and bloody civil war and 100 more years of violent struggle to extend those rights to blacks and women. In fact, all of the rights we have have been won through struggle.

Property taxes are still, however, the basis for school funding. Even the literacy programs are funded on property values. As long as property remains the basis for funding schools, education will remain separate and unequal, providing quality education for those who have property and denying it to those who do not. What I did not know when I was fifteen, but is eminently clear to me now, is that it will only be through socialist revolution, which topples the capitalist state and brings the multiracial working class to power, that we can hope to have integrated equal education for all. ■

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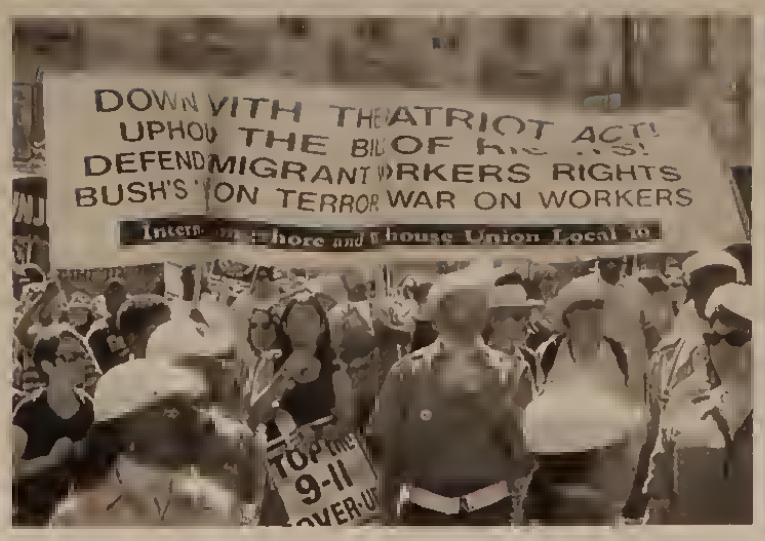
Million Worker March...

(continued from page 16)

Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee that "port employers are not following Coast Guard regulations vigorously." While lately Local 10 leaders have voiced support to the port truckers' cause, Mitre focused on attacking largely immigrant port truckers as the problem—this while the non-union port truckers are desperately trying to organize against the same shipping bosses that want to destroy the ILWU.

The ILWU tops have offered up longshoremen as the guardians of capitalist security on the waterfront. Instead of uniting all workers on the docks in a union fight, these misleaders have split the working class by openly embracing the "war on terror" targeting immigrants and the ILWU itself. This demonstrates that unless you have a trade-union leadership that makes a decisive break with the capitalist state, it will intertwine the union with the capitalist state and its repressive apparatus, even to the point of having the union carry out some of the state's police functions. With the capitalists on an anti-immigrant witchhunt, only a fighting workers party can lead a winning struggle for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants* and to *organize the unorganized*.

An example of the kind of labor-centered class struggle that a revolutionary workers party would fight for is the Oakland 9 February 2002 united-front protest in defense of immigrant rights and against the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League. Support from ILWU Local 10 was crucial in making this protest a real demonstration of labor solidarity.



WV Photos

ILWU contingent at March 20 antiwar demonstration in San Francisco. Right: Poster at ILWU Local 10 hall pushes Kerry-Edwards ticket; local newspaper highlights Kerry's agreement with Bush on asserting U.S. military power.

This Government—Democrat or Republican—Is Not Ours

When the MWM Mission Statement denounces the "handful of the rich and powerful corporations [who] have usurped our government," it feeds the illusions of workers that this is "our government" and not a tool of the "rich and powerful corporations." Besides, "usurped" from whom? As most of the heavily black workforce of ILWU Local 10 knows, the "founding fathers" of this country—Washington, Jefferson, Madison, etc.—were rich white men whose wealth was accumulated from the labor of the black slaves they owned.

American *capitalist* democracy is a tool for the continued dictatorship of the employers and the exploitation of the workers. The government, tied by thousands of threads to Wall Street, acts as an executive committee on behalf of the employers as a whole, whether Democrats or Republicans are in charge. Its real job is to defend the capitalists' continued rule, their wealth and their profits by wielding armed force—the cops, the courts, the prisons—against unions, black people, immigrants and all the oppressed. It is a fantasy that the bourgeois political parties and the government can be made accountable to the poor and oppressed, as the MWM claims.

Nonetheless, a wide range of self-proclaimed socialist groups—like the reformist Workers World Party, International Socialist Organization, Freedom Socialist Party, Northern California Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, and Socialist Organizer—have flocked to the MWM, echoing the fake refrain of "independence." This is nothing new. In July of 1936, for example, the American Labor Party (ALP) was founded in New York City, where the workers had a long and strong socialist tradition. Its leadership included the officials of key unions in the city, as well as leaders of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, who all promoted the ALP as an "independent party." But in reality, the purpose of the ALP was to channel socialist-minded workers into voting for Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democrats, "to put over a deliberate political swindle on workers who were seeking genuine independent labor political organization and action" (see Art Preis, *Labor's Giant Step* [Pathfinder, 1972]).

The American labor movement is disarmed by its leadership's acceptance of the capitalist system and its allegiance to the Democratic Party. The fight to forge a new, class-struggle leadership in the trade unions is inseparable from the fight to forge a workers party—and in the end both will be built through the struggles of labor and the oppressed in defense of their interests against the capitalist bosses.

Writing on the eve of the Second World War, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky advanced the Transitional Program both to defend the interests of the proletariat under capitalism and to take forward the struggle for socialist revolution, writing:

> "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish. 'Realizability' or 'unrealizability' is in the given instance a question of the relationship of forces, which can be decided only by the struggle. By means of this struggle, no matter what its immediate practical successes may be, the workers will best come to understand the necessity of liquidating capitalist slavery."

For the workers and all the oppressed to achieve their fundamental needs—like education, health care, decent jobs—this country must be taken out of the hands of the Wall Street billionaires and put in the hands of the workers. While fighting to defend every gain of the workers, a workers party would use every struggle to prepare for the fight for a workers government—a different kind of government democratically run by the workers that seizes industry, transportation and the banks from the capitalists and rebuilds the country based on planning for social need, not profit. The MWM's political program is an obstacle to building the politically independent, fighting workers party we desperately need.■

Karl Marx: "Abolish the Wages System!"

In his 1865 work *Value, Price and Profit*, Karl Marx addressed the limits of even the most militant struggles that remain within the confines of the capitalist system:

"They [the working class] ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, '*A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!*' they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, '*Abolition of the wages system!*'"

1937 Flint sit-down strike led to rise of UAW as powerful industrial union. To defend its interests and those of the oppressed, labor must be mobilized in struggle.

Spartacus Youth Club Forums

Break with the Democrats! No Vote to Nader!

We Need a Fighting Workers Party!

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Immanuel Presbyterian Church
3300 Whilshire Blvd.
(1 block west of Wilshire/Vermont Redline Station)
For more information: (213) 380-8239 or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net
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Thursday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m.
UC Berkeley
110 Wheeler Hall
(near downtown Berkeley BART)
For more information: (510) 839-0851 or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net
BAY AREA

Saturday, September 11, 5 p.m.
Also: Eyewitness Report from RNC Protests
UIC Circle Center, White Oak Room, 750 S. Halsted St.
For more information: (312) 563-0441 or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com
CHICAGO

Labor Black League Discussion

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Update on Mumia's case and readers circle discussion to follow showing of:
From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal

Saturday, September 18, 4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318
(1-1/2 blocks north of Chambers St.)
For more information: (212) 267-1025
NEW YORK CITY

WORKERS VANGUARD

Break with the Democrats! Fight for a Class-Struggle Workers Party!

Million Worker March: Tail of Lesser-Evilism

Working people in the U.S. are frustrated and looking for a way out from the grinding exploitation, racist oppression and poverty that pervade American life. Most are rightly fearful and angry at the loathsome Bush administration, and are looking for an alternative. But no such alternative exists with Democrat John Kerry, who at nearly every turn—like the "war on terror" and the occupation of Iraq—is promoting himself as an even more effective "war president." The only way to fight for the interests of working people and the oppressed is to build a workers party that will lead the struggle for the emancipation of labor through socialist revolution and the establishment of a workers government.

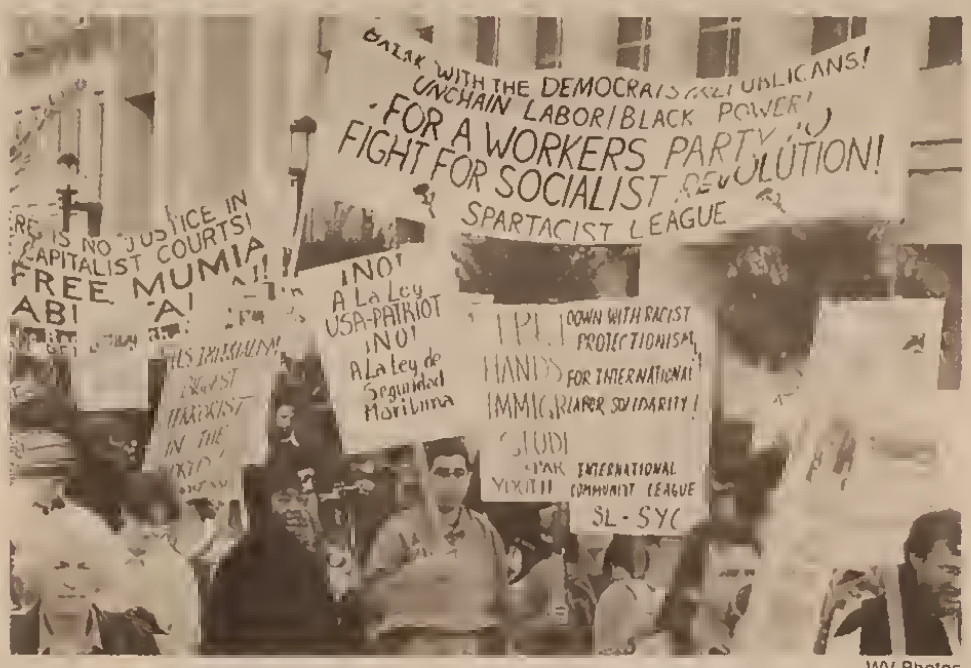
Judging from the AFL-CIO's official "stay away" orders to unions, you might think that the "Million Worker March" (MWM), scheduled for October 17 in Washington, D.C., is a break from "lesser evil" support for the bosses' Democratic Party in the November 2 elections. Indeed, "a great movement for social change" (to borrow words from the MWM Mission Statement) is urgently needed in this country, but the movers and shakers behind the MWM have no intention of building the workers party we really need.

Many workers think that an "Anybody but Bush" vote for Kerry is not really a vote for the capitalists' other party of racism and war. Without an explicit renunciation of the Democrats, railing against the Bush administration only feeds these illusions. The MWM platform deliberately avoids denouncing "lesser evil" support to the Democrats—including by their own unions, whose tops are pouring money into Kerry's campaign coffers. Workers who want a genuinely independent workers party must raise their own class-struggle banners at the MWM in October.

Some workers are indeed disgusted with the prostration of the AFL-CIO officialdom under John Sweeney, whose 1995 promise to revive the union movement has proved utterly empty, and with their blatant electioneering for the Democrats. How then does a union bureaucrat mobilize those among the black, Hispanic and working-class population who are disaffected to turn out for the Democrats this November? This is where the MWM, with its facade of "independence," comes in.

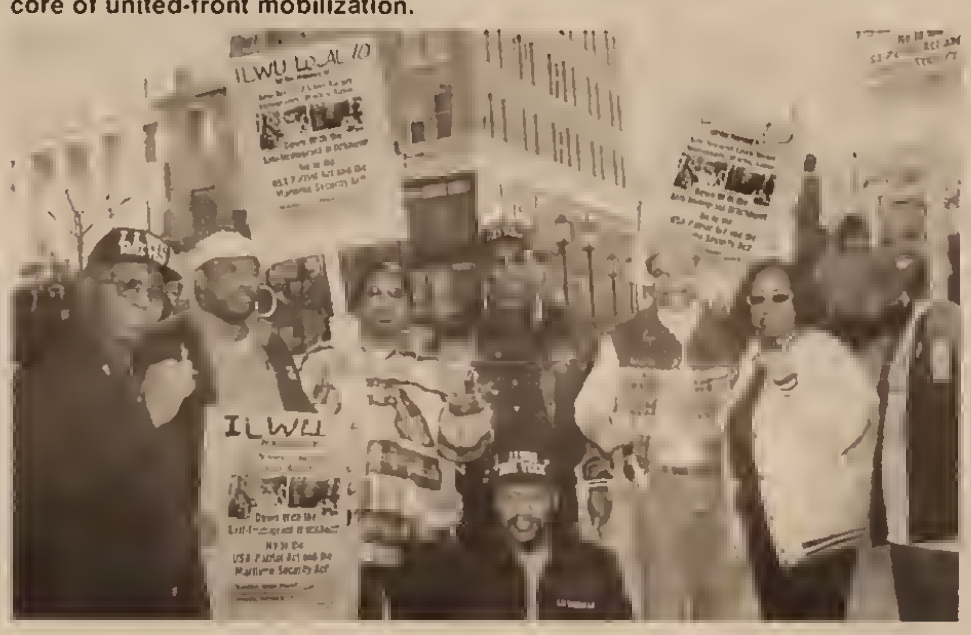
Sweeney & Co. issued a memorandum to "All State Federations and Central Labor Councils" encouraging them "not to sponsor or devote resources to the demonstration in Washington, DC but instead to remain focused on the election." In answer, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 president Henry Graham and two MWM co-chairs, Local 10 officials Clarence Thomas and Trent Willis, baldly stated: "There is nothing inconsistent with our mobilizing for October 17 and attempts to dump Bush." The ILWU has endorsed Kerry's campaign. One MWM supporter, F. Christopher Silvera, an official of Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City, frankly declared in a letter posted on the MWM Web site:

> "The Million Worker March is a crucial vehicle for voter mobilization. The timing of it, coming two weeks before the election makes the march the cheapest, most effective get-out-the-vote initiative ever undertaken by the Teamsters and the AFL-CIO."



WV Photos

Oakland, 9 February 2002: Partisan Defense Committee and Labor Black League initiated labor-centered demonstration against government's "anti-terror" laws, in defense of immigrant rights. Below: Longshoremen were at core of united-front mobilization.



We Need a Workers Government!

The MWM Mission Statement raises many of the urgent problems of working people today whose living conditions are under assault across the board—health care, education, housing, jobs, wages, the U.S. war against Iraq. But no way will these problems be solved by "demand[ing] that politicians and the administration listen to the people who pay their salaries, rather than the voices of big business and the rich," as the ILWU Local 10 resolution initiating the MWM last February said. That amounts to yet another fruitless attempt to pressure capitalist politicians to do the right thing for the working class. But this is a for-profit system where the government serves the ruling class and no one else.

To go forward, the working class has to mobilize its social power independent of the capitalists, their state and all their political parties. In the recent strike of grocery workers in Southern California, what was really needed for the UFCW to succeed against the supermarket bosses was the national extension of the strike, including actions like shutting down the distribution centers. This kind of class-struggle militancy would mean defying the bosses' laws and injunctions, anathema to the UFCW leadership and the union bureaucracy more generally.

No decisive gain for labor was ever won in a courtroom or by an act of Congress. Everything the workers movement has won of value has been achieved by mobilizing the ranks of labor in hard-fought struggle, on the picket lines, in plant occupations. The strength of the unions lies in their numbers, their militancy, their organization and discipline and their relation to the decisive means of production in modern capitalist society. What counts is power, and for a long time labor has not flexed its muscles.

Though today's union tops often speak at MLK Day assemblies and invoke racial equality, they reject the hard class struggle needed to organize integrated unions. This is most sharply posed in the South, where "right to work" laws are backed up by racist Klan terror. The union bureaucracy's refusal to wage the kind of struggles needed to organize the South and the unorganized more generally has resulted in the spiraling decline in union membership and the general weakening of the labor movement that has been taking place over the last few decades.

Organize the Unorganized! Jobs for All!

In a statement last May, Clarence Thomas declared that "the central reason" for the MWM "is the systematic outsourcing of our jobs to areas of the world where workers can be exploited even more ruthlessly." Thomas himself has on many occasions supported international labor solidarity (for example, in defense of Iraqi trade unions). But any form of support for "America First" economic nationalism puts you in bed with your own bourgeoisie.

Appeals for protectionism—seeking barriers to the import of competing goods from abroad—reinforce U.S. capitalist interests and widen chauvinist and racist divisions within the working class internationally. Unemployment and the drive to lower the cost of labor are necessary to the capitalist boom-bust economic cycle. The capitalist will always go where wages are lowest, whether it's the open shop American South or India. Key to the defense of workers in the U.S. is ***solidarity action to support organizing of workers in foreign countries.***

The union tops have also pledged allegiance to the political goals of U.S. imperialism. A graphic example is outlined in the May 2004 issue of the ILWU's *Dispatcher*, which headlines: "ILWU Lobbies Congress for Port Security." The ILWU flew its new "Port Security Director," Mike Mitre, to Washington to testify on June 9 to the House

continued on page 15

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 832 | GAU C-701 | 17 September 2004

No Choice for Workers in 2004 Elections

Janoski/Getty

AP

Russell/Getty

Iraqi civilians in Baghdad flee scene of carnage after U.S. helicopters fired missiles into a crowd gathering around a destroyed U.S. armored vehicle, September 12.

Break with the Democrats!

For a Workers Party!

With a peculiarly war-crazed and oddly demented administration sitting in the White House, there is a strong sentiment among many working people, minorities and young activists to vote for "Anybody but Bush." It is not so much that people want to vote for Democrat John Kerry, but that they want to vote *against* Bush. While wanting to see Bush ousted is a wholly understandable sentiment, to throw one's vote to another competing capitalist politician runs counter to fighting to defend the interests of working people and the oppressed. The policies pursued by the Bush regime that rightly elicit opposition and indignation (like the Iraq war and occupation, the "war on terror" and evisceration of democratic rights, the attacks on the rights of black people, immigrants and women, etc.) are not simply the product of a particularly vicious administration. War, racism and repression are endemic to the oppressive capitalist system under which we live. To defend and pursue the interests of working people and the oppressed, what is required first and foremost is a break with all capitalist parties—beginning with the Democrats, the other party of war and racism—and the forging of a revolutionary workers party that fights to get rid of the capitalist system through workers revolution.

While the country is becoming ever more sharply polarized as the elections approach, the differences between the two candidates are ever narrowing. This could be easily gleaned from the recent Democratic and Republican conventions, both of which were unabashed displays of patriotism and militarism (as well as police repression against protesters—see article on RNC protests on page 6). Bush launched the Iraq war; Kerry voted for the war and says he would vote for it now even after the exposés of the grand lies the administration used to invade Iraq. Bush is for maintaining the bloody occupation; Kerry is for maintaining the bloody occupation. Bush wants to continue waging the "war on terror"; Kerry promotes himself as a more *effective* fighter in this sordid "war," which is a war against immigrants, black and working people, and a means by which the capitalists try to deny the population its democratic rights and civil liberties. Even on those issues where the candidates disagree, like abortion rights, Kerry proclaimed that he would have no problem appointing an anti-abortion judge to the Supreme Court.

It's not simply that the policies of Bush and Kerry are so alike, but that the two parties of American capitalism are so alike. Both parties represent the interests of the capitalist ruling class. In a "state of the union" speech 32 years ago, America's great essayist and novelist Gore Vidal aptly noted, "We have only one political party in the United States, the Property Party, with two right wings, Republican and Democrat." Today, Vidal adds, "Although the secret core to each presidential election is who can express his hatred of African-Americans most suhtly (to which today can be added Latinos and 'elite liberals,' a fantasy category associated with working film actors who have won Academy Awards), and, of course, this season it's the marriage-minded so-called gays. So-called because there is no such human or mammal category (sex is a continuum) except in the great hollow pumpkin head of that gambling dude who has anointed himself the nation's moralist-in-chief, William 'Bell Fruit' Bennett" (*Nation*, 13 September).

In 1948, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon explained how Marxists define the class character of a party:

> "It is not determined by the class which supports the party at the moment, but rather by the class which the party supports: that is to say, by its program. That is the basic meaning of a political program, the support of one class rule or another. The class character of a party is also determined by its actual practice.... Another factor to be considered is the composition of a party. A bourgeois party of the classical type is easily recognized because it has all three of these qualities—it is bourgeois in program, in practice, and in composition."
>
> —"Election Policy in 1948," printed in "Aspects of Socialist Election Policy," *Education for Socialists* (March 1971)

To move forward and to effectively fight for their rights and interests, working people and leftist youth must begin with the understanding that American society, like all capitalist societies, is divided between two fundamental classes: the capitalist class and the working class.

continued on page 10

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The IG and Iraq Occupation

22 August 2004

Dear Workers Vanguard,

I would like to add to the polemic against the pseudo-revolutionary Internationalist Group in *Workers Vanguard* No. 830 in the article entitled "The Left and the 'Iraqi Resistance': U.S. Out of Iraq Now!" As mentioned, in several of their articles they have polemicized against our use of the slogan "U.S. Troops Out of Iraq, Now!" because it supposedly echoes sectors of the bourgeoisie and appeals to the capitalist rulers. In addition, they claim that the Spartacist League "willfully obscures the position of Lenin" for not flaunting a slogan calling for ***defeat*** of the colonial occupation. A closer look proves that it is really the IG who grossly distorts Lenin.

For over a century, genuine Marxists have used slogans similar to "Colonial Troops Out!" and the IG knows it. The founder of the IG, Jan Norden, not only used such slogans when he himself was editor of *WV*, but also continued to use such slogans after he and his posse started producing the IG's newspaper, the *Internationalist*, in 1997. Thus, their April-May 1999 issue had an article on Yugoslavia with the subheading, "U.S./UN/NATO Out of the Balkans!" In a June 2000 *Internationalist*, an article on Puerto Rico prominently displayed in the title, "Navy Get the Hell Out of Vieques *Now*!" How is the aforementioned slogan of the IG any different from the supposedly capitulatory slogan "U.S. Troops Out of Iraq Now"? Lastly, a June 2001 *Internationalist* ran an article entitled, "From Puerto Rico to Korea: U.S. Bombers Get Out!" Has the IG since had a line change that needs to be explained, or are we simply talking about false polemics here?

At the root of the IG's weak criticism is a reversal of Leninism through the implication that any ***negative*** slogan is necessarily a class-collaborationist appeal to the bourgeoisie. This is false. The only fundamental difference between the IG's slogan and ours is that we don't indicate exactly ***how*** the imperialists are going to leave Iraq—whether by increased attacks by Iraqi insurgents, class struggle at home, mounting imperialist rivalries, etc. In a piece by Lenin appropriately titled "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism," he states with reference to a discussion on self-determination: "The slogan 'get out of the colonies' has one and only one political and economic content: freedom of secession for the colonial nations, freedom to establish a separate state!" What's most crucial for Marxists in the case of Iraq is that the neocolonial invaders leave; in that sense, the slogans used by the IG and the SL are not hugely distinguishable. Moreover, what Leninists understand about the use of ***negative*** slogans like that of "U.S. Troops Out" is that it should be paired with a positive slogan in order to advance revolutionary consciousness. *Workers Vanguard*'s choice to emphasize "For class struggle at home!"—a positive slogan which points the working class in the right direction—fulfills this purpose.

Of course, it would be a great blow for imperialism and a victory for working people around the world if the murderous imperialist forces were ***driven out***, as the IG emphasizes. But this requires realistically taking into account the differences between the forces on the ground, including the immense military superiority of the imperialists, and the lack of conscious working-class mobilization among the forces of the resistance. Again, as Lenin put it: "...every slogan [must] be justified by a precise analysis of ***economic*** realities, the ***political*** situation and the ***political*** significance of the slogan. It is embarrassing to have to drive home the ABC of Marxism, but what is one to do...?"

The IG certainly has a history of tailing alien class forces in search for quick "action" strategies, even if this relies on a lower level of consciousness. This is reflected in the fact that their articles on Iraq barely whisper a critical statement against the politics of the forces that seem to be leading the various resistance groups. This is the real crime of the IG's perspective. Lenin strongly warned against politically supporting an uprising of the reactionary classes against imperialism. The retrograde, fundamentalist consciousness of many of the resistance leaders, several who would just as likely kill a communist or an unveiled woman as an American soldier, is centuries away from revolutionary Marxism. While the battles waged against the neocolonial occupiers on the part of the insurgents are just and defensible, any Marxist cannot be blind to the fact that their leaders would be the new enemy to the working class and the oppressed after taking power.

Revolutionary Greetings,
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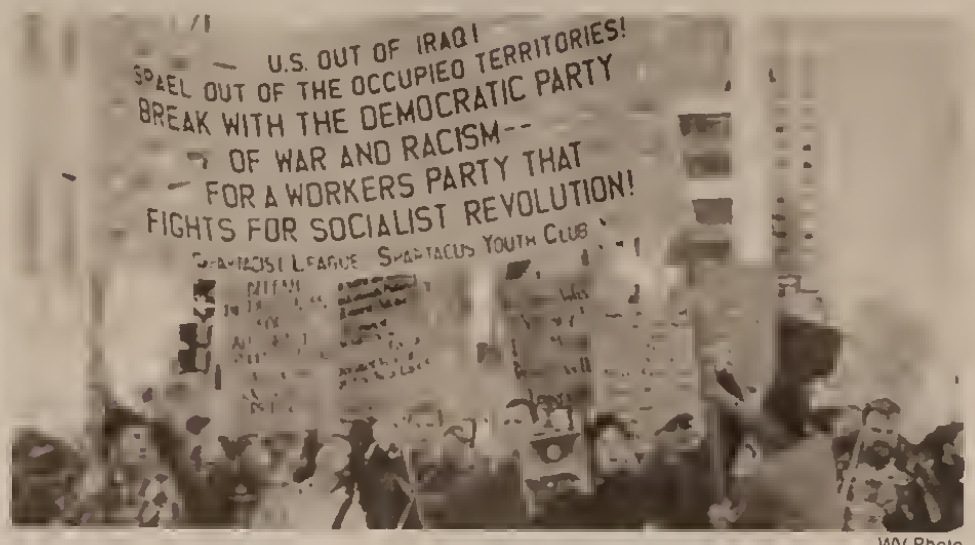

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at March 20 protest in Chicago.

"No Peace with the Present-Day State!"

TROTSKY

LENIN

In an 1869 speech, German socialist leader Wilhelm Liebknecht (father of the revolutionary Marxist Karl Liebknecht) attacked the notion that socialists (who at the time called themselves Social Democrats) could get rid of capitalism through parliamentary means. Emphasizing the need for social revolution, Liebknecht pointed out that the capitalist state and its apparatus would not allow a peaceful transition to socialism.

Let us assume that a candidate comes up for election and that the government is absolutely opposed to having him in the "Reichstag" [parliament]. The government will confiscate the newspapers that advocate his election—it will do so legally; it will confiscate his election handbills—also legally; or it will give permits for meetings of electors and then dissolve them—again legally; it will arrest the candidate's campaign managers—quite legally; it will arrest the candidate himself—also legally....

But let us assume that the government—either because it feels it is strong enough, or because of some other calculation—makes no use of its powers, and that it becomes possible, as some socialist statesmen of imagination still dream—to elect a social-democratic majority in the "Reichstag"—what would this majority proceed to do? *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!* Now is the moment for transforming society and the state. The majority will adopt a world-historic decision; the new era is born—don't you believe it! A company of soldiers will eject the Social-Democratic majority from its stronghold and if these gentlemen make any objection to this procedure, a few policemen will take them to police headquarters and there they will have time enough to ponder the consequences of their Quixotic aspirations.

Revolutions are not made by getting the permission of the high powers that are in authority; the socialist ideal cannot be achieved within the frame of the present-day state; it must overthrow the state in order to secure the possibility of life.

No peace with the present-day state!

—Wilhelm Liebknecht, "The Elections to Parliament Are Only a Means of Agitation" (1869), printed in *Voices of Revolt: Speeches of Wilhelm Liebknecht* (International Publishers, 1928)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 832 — 17 September 2004

Spartacist League/Trotskyist League Forums

Report Back from RNC Protests

We Need a Fighting Workers Party!

Break with the Democrats! No Vote to Nader!

Saturday, Sept. 25, 6 p.m.
First Parish Church
3 Church St., Harvard Square
Cambridge

For more information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

BOSTON

The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today

Defend, Extend the Gains of the 1949 Revolution!
For a China of Workers and Peasants Councils in a Socialist Asia!

Saturday, Oct. 2, 7 p.m.
Trinity-St. Paul's Centre
427 Bloor Street West
(just west of Spadina subway)

For more information: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.albn.com

TORONTO

Saturday, Oct. 9, 2 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Avenue, Oakland
(5 blocks south of Rockridge BART)

For more information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@scbglobal.net

BAY AREA

Saturday, Oct. 2, 2:30 p.m.
Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Multipurpose Room A
5288 Joyce St. (between Vanness and Kingsway)

VANCOUVER

For more information: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail TLLT@look.ca

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

How the Liberals and Reformists Derailed the Struggle for Integration

Saturday, Oct. 9, 5 p.m.
University of Chicago
Bartlett Gymnasium, Student Lounge
5640 S. University Avenue

For more information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

CHICAGO

NYC Transit: "Workplace Violence" Frame-Up

Reinstate TWU Shop Chairman Carlos Blackman!

NEW YORK—On September 8, a so-called "impartial arbitrator" upheld the firing of Carlos Blackman, an elected shop chairman of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100. As a dedicated union fighter against unsafe working conditions and speedup at the 240th St. subway car maintenance shop in the Bronx, Blackman is the victim of a transparent "workplace violence" frame-up by New York City Transit (NYCT) management. The victimization of Blackman represents an attack on all transit workers and on the union as a whole.

The first accusation against Blackman, which he flatly denied, was that during an incident when he tried to halt the use of an unsafe hydraulic jack last December 4, he supposedly told the supervisor that he couldn't be thrown off the property because he had "a .38." Secondly, Blackman was accused by a supervisor of saying that two transit supervisors who were killed in February at the Coney Island Subway Yard "deserved what they got" because one of them had fired the worker accused of shooting them. Blackman denied making such a statement, and he was backed up by a fellow worker who testified at the hearing. But the arbitrator simply dismissed these two black workers as not "credible" witnesses. In the slaveholders' South, black slaves could not testify in court; a slave could be convicted of any crime simply on the say-so of the "master." No wonder transit workers refer to the system they are subjected to as "plantation justice"!

The NYCT's frame-up of Blackman provoked outrage on the part of his union brothers and sisters, transcending ethnic, racial and national divisions within the workforce. A transit worker at the 240th St. maintenance shop told a *WV* salesman: "It's terrible. We have to do something. We have to defend him!" Before Blackman's firing, scores of TWU members rallied on April 21 at 240th St. to protest his suspension. The union has filed a federal court suit demanding that Blackman be reinstated and allowed to perform his union duties without interference. There is reportedly considerable rank-and-file sentiment in favor of granting this staunch fighter a staff position in the union. That would be good, but that should not be the end of the story. This anti-union attack should be met by a mobilization of the power of the TWU with solidarity from other unions in this city demanding Blackman's *reinstatement with full seniority and back pay*.

Bryan/TWU Local 100

Carlos Blackman (center) with union brothers at Bronx support rally in April.

The firing of Carlos Blackman sets a dangerous precedent, posing a threat not only to transit workers but to workers throughout the country. If they can fire a respected union officer on such patently trumped-up charges, then they can run roughshod over any militant worker on the pretext of "workplace violence" against the company. The statement Blackman was accused of making about the Coney Island incident was simply ruled to be "extremely detrimental to the efficient workings of the shop." By that criterion, you could be fired for *anything* from protesting unsafe conditions to denouncing racist abuse!

This case is a stark example of how the policy of relying on binding arbitration and court suits is a trap for the working class. So-called "neutral" arbitrators and judges are actually agents of the capitalists. The union bureaucracy's reliance on binding arbitration serves as an excuse to avoid the kind of hard class struggle that is the only way the working class can defend itself and win significant gains. But while the union tops play by the bosses' rules, straitjacketing union workers, the capitalists are using brass knuckles. The very day after Blackman's arbitration hearing ended, the NYCT, claiming to have found graffiti in some conductor cabs supposedly threatening the Republican National Convention, precipitated a July 14 police raid on the shop where Blackman worked. The early-morning sweep, involving more than two dozen police cars, was a blatant attempt to intimidate and regiment transit workers. Such sinister shows of force are part of the repressive climate created by the capitalist rulers' "war on terror," which is actually a war on blacks, immigrants and unions.

However, the TWU Local 100 leadership of president Roger Toussaint, while formally backing Blackman's case and supporting the rally at his work location, has not sought to mobilize the power of labor in his defense. In contrast, during the Republican National Convention the TWU bureaucracy put the forces of the union at the disposal of a labor rally that was nothing but a campaign rally for Democrat John Kerry. And a TWU poster calling for a vote for Kerry hangs prominently in the Local 100 union hall. The class-collaborationist program of the union bureaucrats in this country is exemplified by their integration into the capitalist Democratic Party.

It is vital to know who are our friends and who are our enemies. This is based on the recognition that the interests of workers and bosses are counterposed. To mobilize the power of labor, it is necessary to fight for a class-struggle union leadership that breaks labor's ties to the Democrats and fights for the independent mobilization of the working class. ■

Iran: Kurdish Leftist Sentenced to Death

Stop the Execution of Esmail Mohammadi!

We reprint below a September 14 letter by the Partisan Defense Committee to the Iranian authorities.

The Partisan Defense Committee vehemently denounces the Iranian government's threatened execution of Kurdish leftist Esmail Mohammadi, and condemns the ongoing state repression against Iranian and Kurdish activists. Esmail Mohammadi, a 38-year-old father of five who is a supporter of the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan, was arrested in 2002 at his home in Bukan, western Iran. He was reportedly charged with "armed struggle against the Islamic regime" and "membership of a proscribed organization," and was sentenced to death in July 2003. Other reported charges accused Mohammadi of "being at war with god" and "corruption on earth," both of which are punishable by death under Iran's Islamic theocracy. This summer, Mohammadi's appeal of his death sentence was denied by five judges of Branch 32 of the Supreme Court, claiming that he "confessed" to the charges against him.

As an August 21 Komala protest letter states, "The government of Iran is trying to create fear and terror in [the] people of Kurdistan by executing Mr. Mohammadi." Since his arrest, this courageous leftist has been subjected to numerous brutal interrogations as well as mental and physical torture. Untold numbers of government opponents, trade unionists, women and others deemed by the government to have violated Islamic law have been imprisoned and executed. On August 15, for example, Ateqeh Rajabi, a 16-year-old girl, was publicly hanged in the northern province of Mazandaran for "acts incompatible with chastity"!

Kurdish militants have been particularly targeted by the regime, with scores executed every year. Last year alone, at least two members of Komala —Saasaan Al Kanaan and Mohammad Golahee—were executed. As opponents of capitalist state repression and the barbaric institution of the death penalty everywhere, including in the U.S. imperialist state, we demand: *Stop the execution of Esmail Mohammadi! Free him now!*

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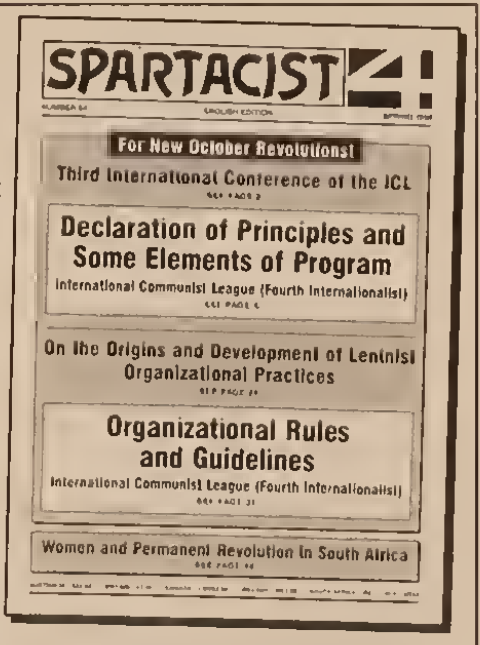

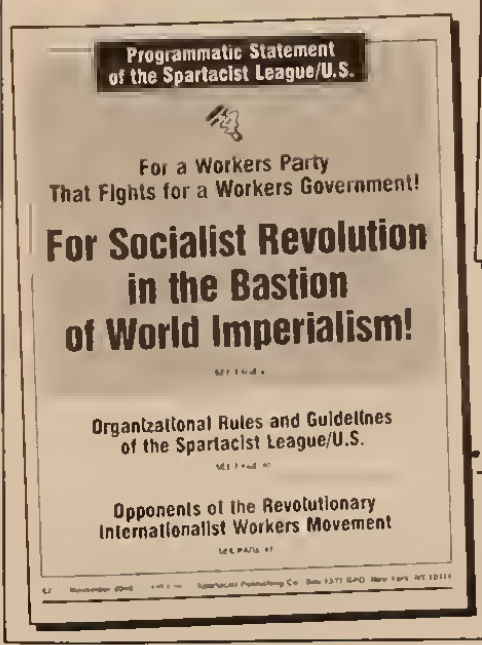

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Japan: The Struggle Against Women's Oppression

We print below a translation of an article from Spartacist Japan *(No. 29, April 2004), publication of the Spartacist Group Japan, section of the International Communist League.*

スパルタシスト

On 1 May 1921 about 20 women joined 10,000 of their class brothers in the second official Japanese May Day demonstration. The women were organized by the group called Sekirankai, a socialist women's organization. In preparation for the May Day rally, Sekirankai wrote a manifesto, authored by Yamakawa Kikue. This was four years after the 1917 Russian Revolution, and the manifesto gives an indication of the power that revolution held for working people and women:

> "May Day is our day, the day of the oppressed, propertyless working class. For several tens of centuries, the path women and workers have travelled down is the path of the history of oppression and ignorance. But the light is coming close. In Russia, the echo of the victorious extermination of the darkness of capitalism from the face of the earth is moment by moment thundering like the roar of a bell at daybreak. Within this echo is the power of the secluded woman, and, within the limits of our ability, together with our brothers, isn't it the chimes of the liberation of the propertyless class in Japan?
>
> "The Sekirankai is a women's organization that plans to participate in the enterprise to destroy the capitalist society and build a socialist society. The capitalist society turns us into slaves at home and oppresses us as wage slaves outside the home...
>
> "The Sekirankai declares all-out war on this cruel, shameless society.... Socialism offers the only way to save humankind from the oppression and abuses of capitalism. Sisters who love justice and humanity, join the socialist movement!"

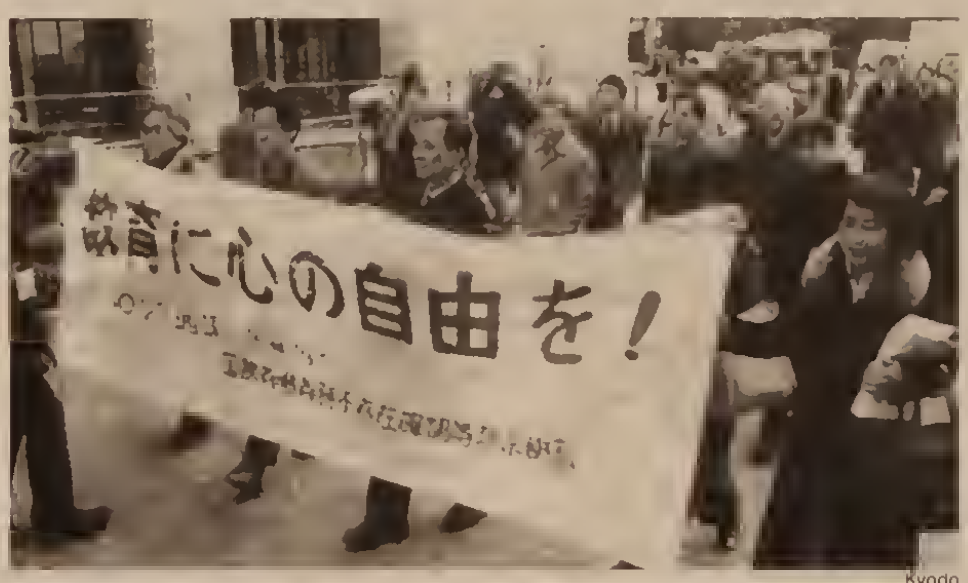
At that time, under the infamous Article 5 of the Police Security Regulations, women were legally prohibited from joining political organizations, attending political meetings and giving political speeches. All 20 of the women who marched in this May Day demonstration under red and black flags were arrested. The next major activity of this organization was raising the funds necessary to get their comrades out of jail. Due to state repression, the life of Sekirankai was very short. Some of its members left the socialist movement. Others, such as Sakai Magara and Nakasone Sadayo, were arrested for distributing antiwar leaflets to soldiers. Takatsu Tayoko and her husband were arrested for producing a publication that included threats against the emperor system.

Early Heroic Struggles of Women Workers

By 1890 women had become the backbone of the developing Japanese industrial economy. Female workers, the majority of whom were indentured, outnumbered males in light industry, especially textiles, where a workforce that was 60 to 90 percent female produced 40 percent of the gross national product and 60 percent of the foreign exchange during the last part of the nineteenth century.

It is no accident that in every modern social revolution and numerous class battles women workers have been among the most audacious and courageous fighters. The low wages, long hours, prevalence of disease, prison-like conditions and rampant sexual attacks drove women workers to fight. The first strike in Japan was in 1886 at the Kofu Amamiya Kihyoei silk mill. More than one hundred women walked out in protest over longer working hours, lowered wages and arbitrary fines. Their action took management so much by surprise that they won most of their demands, including a return to the 14-hour workday. This strike sparked a series of others that summer.

On the eve of the government's celebration of the Meiji Constitution, strikes and walkouts gathered force throughout the country. In late September of 1889, 300 women workers struck the Tenma Cotton Spinning Company of Osaka demanding higher wages and the promised bonus payments. In the face of firings and physical intimidation, the workers persisted for days. A key factor in the successful outcome of the strike was that the male machinists decided to join the strike. By the time the strike ended on 5 October, 60 men and 20 women had been arrested, but the workers received a wage hike and some control over their bonuses, setting a precedent for workers in other mills.



Kyodo

Tokyo, January 30: Teachers protest government imposition of *hinomaru* and *kimigayo*, the flag and anthem. The banner reads, "For Freedom of Thought in Education!"

Toshiki Sawaguchi

February 1994: Japanese nurses protest overtime, staff shortages and subsidy cuts, demand better health care for all.

The early strike activity carried out by female textile workers was done without the support of an organized union movement. All wings of the union movement—from patriotic to social-democratic to the Hogikai federation affiliated with the Communist Party—refused to organize women workers and also "colonized workers," the Koreans and Chinese who were working in Japan, on a mass basis. At the high point of prewar unionization in the 1930s, Japanese women constituted less than 6 percent of unionized workers, while they were 52.6 percent of the entire factory workforce in 1930. Today women compose almost half of the workforce but less than 20 percent of the union membership.

The role that Japanese women played in the labor movement was noted at the 2nd World Conference of Communist Women in July 1921. In addressing the conference, Leon Trotsky noted:

> "In the progress of the world labour movement, women proletarians play a colossal role. I say this not because I am addressing a women's conference but because sheer numbers indicate what an important part the woman worker plays in the mechanism of the capitalist world—in France, Germany, in America, in Japan, in every capitalist country.... Statistics inform me that in Japan, there are many more women than men workers; and consequently, if the data at my disposal is credible, in the labour movement of Japan, they, the proletarian women, are destined to play the decisive role and to occupy the decisive place."

Following these strikes, the government moved fast. The Meiji government adopted heavily Confucian-influenced values of the *samurai* class as the foundation for its new social and legal structures which made women subordinate to men. The new order took the form of the *ie* [family household structure] as the basis for its new hierarchical social structure with the emperor on top as the head of the household (the entire country) and the husband as the absolute head of his respective household. Primogeniture was mandated for all classes. In 1898, the Civil Code and Domestic Relations and the Inheritance Law were enacted. Both pieces of legislation institutionalized more rigid family controls than most people had known in the feudal period. In 1890 the Law on Political Associations and Assembly was passed, making it illegal for women to participate in any political activities and even to listen to political speeches. In 1900 this law was reinforced with the passage of the Police Security Regulations whose infamous Article 5 was mentioned above. By the 1920s even the bourgeois *Mainichi* newspaper commented that, "Japan maltreats and insults her women to a graver extent than any other country on the globe."

For more than 100 years women have been protesting against the so-called Japanese family system. Given that the family came to be crucial in the structures of authority under the Meiji Constitution, any attempt to even question the role of the family in society was met with government repression. In 1884, Kishida Toshiko, who toured the country giving speeches demanding political rights for women, was arrested for her attack on the family system. She described the family as imprisonment for women and compared the upbringing of daughters to the cultivation of the *bonsai*, whose shape is created by the trimming of roots and branches. Another woman was Fukuda Hideko. She had been arrested in 1885 on charges of treason for fighting for the Korean independence movement following the Sino-Japanese accord of the same year. In 1907, she established the socialist women's journal *Sekai Fujin* (Women of the World) in which she argued that equality between men and women cannot

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

be achieved without a social transformation along socialist lines, and what was necessary was the destruction of private property.

Emperor System Sanctifies Social and Sexual Hierarchy

In many aspects, the crucial questions facing working women today parallel those from the Meiji period when women were regarded as *hara wa kurimon*, obligated to produce a suitable heir for the family and empire. They were to be teachers of patriotism and loyalty in the home, and in the midst of social unrest, pillars of stability as *ryosai kenbo* [good wife, wise mother]. Today, the reactionary "good wife, wise mother" ideology is still codified in law, paternalistic corporate practices and religious superstition. Japan is home to the bullet train, Sony PlayStation, robotics and developer of state-of-the-art technology. It has the technological knowledge and capability, if placed in the hands of the world's working people, to begin the work of eliminating scarcity, hunger and poverty. And yet, women are still prohibited from entering tunnels under construction for bullet trains out of fear that the "mountain goddess" will become jealous, nor can they step inside a sumo *dojo* [wrestling ring] because they are "unpure."

Women in all capitalist countries are oppressed. But what is it about Japan that makes thousands of young women want to leave the country and never return? In this country, women's oppression is deeply intertwined with the perpetuation of the emperor system, whose purpose is to sanctify social and sexual hierarchy, the family, private property and the "glory" of the Japanese state. Reactionary Confucian ideology and Shinto and Buddhist religious superstitions permeate every aspect of society and are used by the state as a wedge to interfere into and regulate every aspect of social and private life. This includes even the right of people to name their children what they want. The government has an official list of names, and if you deviate from that list, your child cannot be listed in the family registry.

The traditional household system institutionalized in the 1898 Civil Code may have been technically outlawed by the postwar Civil Code, but its fundamental principles and practices continue. The new Civil Code legally did away with many of the more Confucian aspects of the family system and no longer categorized women as "imbeciles" as did the Meiji Civil Code. But regulations concerning marriage and divoree, and confirmation of paternity and inheritance were maintained. There is an article making it legally mandatory to distinguish between children born in and out of wedlock. Another article stipulates that a woman must wait six months before remarrying after divorce so as to determine the paternity of a child, and another article says a woman can only inherit one-half of her husband's estate. While the new code allows for a couple upon marriage to choose which surname they will use, it must be either the man's or the woman's to accommodate the family registry. While not enforced legally, temples and officials in charge of cemeteries refuse to allow people with different surnames to be buried in the same tomb, meaning that a married woman must he buried with her husband's family, giving new meaning to the old saying that even in death a wife must follow her husband.

While in some cases the courts have ruled that it is illegal to force a woman to quit work when she gets married, or when she reaches the "appropriate" age for marriage, commonly set at 30, the social pressure exerted on women to "settle down" and assume their "appropriate place" in society is immense. Older unmarried women are now referred to as *makeinu* [losing dogs] and *motenai onna* [unwanted females]. Those past 50 who are not married are even supposed to check a special category on the national census that brands them as *shogai mikonsha* [lifelong unmarried people].

In almost all international social indices, Japanese women are placed at the hottom. This is true for surveys regarding percentage in the workforce, the type of job, salary, number of politicians, etc. Just over half of all Japanese women work, compared to more than 70 percent of their Western counterparts. Those that do have johs are mainly outside the regular workforce and confined to "contingency" work: 77 percent of all part-time workers are female. On average, women's salaries are less than 60 percent of their Japanese male counterparts', the lowest percentage of all industrialized nations and a percentage that has been maintained steadily since women first entered industry as textile workers in the late 1800s.

The special oppression of women is essential to the maintenance of power and profit for the ruling class and will not he voluntarily sacrificed. Cheap marginal labor in the workforce makes possible tremendous profits because as lower-paid workers with little protection, women have heen placed in a situation which undermines the wages and conditions of the working class as a whole.

Language is a reflection of social reality, and the hierarchical structure of Japanese society, the *senpai-kohai* [superior-inferior] relationship that exists in the home, in the schools and in husiness, is clearly evident in the demeaning four-tiered language structure requiring different levels of submissiveness depending on whom one is addressing, based on class, age, sex and status. A special language, which most people do not understand, still exists which serves to give a mystical aura to all institutions related to the emperor system.

Mainichi Shinbunsha

During 1926 ten-day struggle against firings at Kawasaki-Fuji Cotton Mill, woman representative from solidarity group in Tokyo leads march in Kawasaki.

W.E. Debenham

Friedrich Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884) explained that basis of women's oppression lies in development of family system and private property.

But perhaps the most vivid reflection of the inequalities in society as evidenced in the written and spoken language concern women. *Onna kotoba* [women's language] deliberately promotes obedience and submissiveness. It is to be used for all public functions and inside the family when dealing with one's in-laws. All written characters concerning women either denote humility or are derogatory, starting with the character for "woman" itself. All words for "wife," and there are many depending on whose wife one is talking about, contain the meaning "the one inside the house." We fight for the elimination of status, age and sex discrimination and, concomitantly, their reflection in demeaning language.

Women's Oppression Is Rooted in the Nuclear Family

The oppression of women is a social institution that rests on private property. It is a human invention that is subject to change like any other. Women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family and has been a feature of all class societies. With the beginnings of industrial capitalism, production moved from the home to the factory. The household became totally private, and women became economically powerless and wholly excluded from social production.

It is the family—and the necessity to control sexual access to the woman to ensure that the children of the marriage, who will be the man's heirs, are really genetically his children—which generates the morality codified in and reinforced by religion. It is the family that throughout a woman's life gives definition to her oppressed state: as daughter, as wife, as mother. As 19th century revolutionary Friedrich Engels wrote in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884): "The overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and became a mere instrument for the production of children." And if you think this was true only 100 years ago, remember the comments of the racist, woman-hating governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintaro. A couple of years ago, he stated that women who have reached the age of menopause no longer have any right to live because they no longer serve any socially productive function.

The family is a key social unit for the maintenance of capitalism. For the capitalists, the family provides the basis for passing on accumulated wealth. And where there is no property to pass on, the institutionalized family serves to raise the next generation of workers, care for the sick and aged, and instill conservative social values and obedience to authority. The working-class family is expected to provide for all the social services that capitalists don't want to pay for. It is therefore in the material interest of the working class to play the historically progressive role of socializing family functions after the revolution.

Each nuclear family exists in isolation from the rest of society, and thus weakens the class consciousness of the workers. Social institutions and conventions—like marriage and the family—are part of the way the ruling class maintains power and regiments society. "Family values" based on religion constitute a conservatizing ideology to regiment the population and prop up bourgeois law and order, which is aimed at justifying and reinforcing the family.

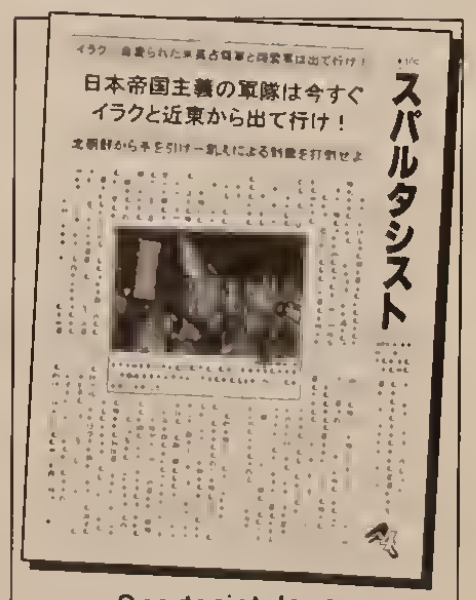
Since at least 1996, there has been a movement to pressure the Diet [Japanese parliament] to pass legislation allowing a married couple to have separate surnames. The continuation of this law has resulted in many couples not marrying at all. Last month, Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] members basically killed a bill to change this law. Their objections are a clear indication of the importance the ruling class places on the maintenance of the nuclear family as the basic unit for regimenting society. One LDP member stated that "The proposed bill will promote too much individualism in society and lead to the collapse of Japan's family system. It is part of a campaign for breaking up the country" (*Kyodo*, 12 March).

The nuclear family, as a socioeconomic unit, is oppressive to all its members. Unmarried couples and parents and their children face all kinds of discriminatory treatment in every aspect of their daily lives, and it is the *koseki* [family registry] which is the instrument that enforces this. The *koseki* system is hell even for those who fall in the most prized social status category—the oldest born son, who, if he decides to change his gender, is prohibited from registering that change, and therefore becomes a *henin* [non-person].

There is a lot of bourgeois hypocrisy involved here. For years, the government has been on a campaign to increase the hirthrate. The JCP [Japanese Communist Party] jumped on this reactionary baby bandwagon in 1999 when they announced that a high birthrate is an index of social equality for women. The next year, they noted that their "proposal for economic reforms to correct 'capitalism without rules' is closely connected with the task of overcoming the 'low birthrates'" ("Draft Resolution of the 22nd Congress of the Japanese Communist Party," 2000). At the same time, women who choose to have children outside the so-called ideal one man, one woman, 2.5 children family structure are ostracized. Single mothers are being denied all economic assistance from the state; children born outside of marriage are bullied in the schools. And the state is denying children born from surrogate mothers entry into the family's *koseki* which means that they do not legally exist.

As members of the proletariat, working women, at the side of their class brothers,

continued on page 9



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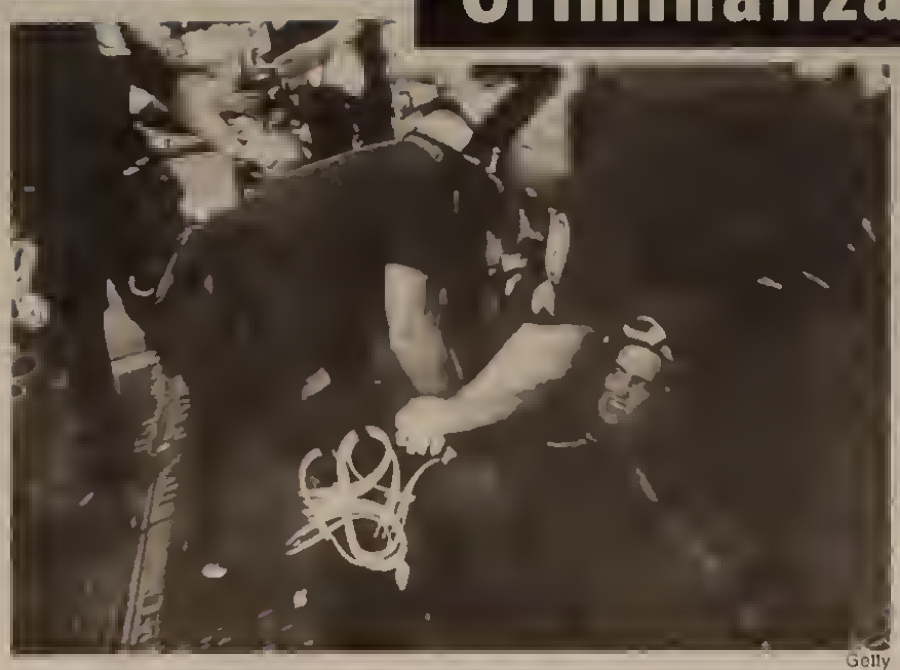
Criminalization of Dissent



Gelly

Jacob Richards and Connie Murillo

Left: Cops arrest protester in Times Square, August 29. Right: Detained protesters are held at Pier S7, which has no windows or ventilation and is full of asbestos.

Drop All Charges Against RNC Protesters!

Inside the Republican National Convention (RNC) George W. Bush proclaimed with fanatical madness to his fundamentalist Christian base that his war in Iraq is a mission from god almighty to fight tyranny and bring freedom to the world. Meanwhile the streets of New York City were turned into a living hell of "code orange" police-state tactics against the hundreds of thousands who poured out to protest the RNC or who just tried to go about their business in New York. There were three times as many arrests during the RNC in New York as there were at the infamous cop riot against protesters at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

A police force with a budget larger than the standing army of all but 19 countries in the world swooped down on just about anything that moved. Helicopters chopped the air above while cops with automatic weapons stalked the subways below. Undercover cops infiltrated leftist planning meetings and violently attacked protests. The city even rented the Fuji blimp and equipped it with surveillance cameras to identify those who dared to exercise their democratic rights to free speech and assembly.

New York mayor Michael Bloomberg and the media tried to whip up fear and loathing of the protesters, particularly the anarchists, who were disavowed by Democratic Party liberals. Bloomberg, who denied half a million protesters the right to free speech and assembly, claimed that the anarchists were denying the RNC delegates' free speech! He went so far as to tar the anarchists with the brush of terrorism, ranting: "That's exactly what the terrorists did, if you think about it, on 9/11. Now this is not the same kind of terrorism but there's no question that these anarchists are afraid to let people speak out" (*New York Times*, 3 September).

Mayor Bloomberg and the NYPD were right about one thing: it was a week of violent criminal activity—we're talking about the Bush gang inside Madison Square Garden and the awesome machinery of state repression unleashed to "protect" them. The NYPD snared entire blocks of people in orange plastic webs and disappeared them for days in a no man's land of detention. Demonstrators were crammed into wire cages in the toxic and filthy Pier 57 on the Hudson River. Parents couldn't find their kids, kids couldn't find their parents, groups couldn't find their comrades. Some were held incommunicado for over 60 hours as the NYPD tried to wipe out all but the tame August 29 protest march until the RNC crowned Bush and left town.

On September 2, State Supreme Court judge John Cataldo demanded the city release all protesters still held in custody or face a $1,000 fine for each person still locked up at 6:00 p.m. The judge slapped the city with a contempt of court ruling, which will be argued in a September 27 hearing. Over 1,800 were arrested, and people face charges ranging from the absurd and trivial to life-robbing felony frame-ups.

The case of Jamal Holiday is among the most serious, and also emblematic of the systematic police violence, repression and surveillance against RNC protesters. Jamal Holiday, a young black man, spent his 20th birthday in jail where he remains held on $50,000 bail and is looking at a future stolen by a cop frame-up. He was with the Poor People's March on August 30 when a plainclothes cop drove an unmarked motor scooter into the crowd of demonstrators hitting at least one woman. The protesters reacted to defend themselves against this apparently crazed individual assaulting them with a motor scooter. In standard racial profiling, Jamal Holiday was picked up the next day by police who claimed surveillance cameras showed him to be wearing the same clothing (a baseball cap and T-shirt!) as an individual filmed kicking the undercover provocateur. Chat on Indymedia's Web site, overwhelmingly positive, also includes scandalous disavowals of Jamal's defense. We say: *Free Jamal Holiday! Drop the charges now!*

For Class-Struggle Defense—Not Kowtowing to the Democrats!

The half-million strong August 29 march was built as a mobilization for the Democratic Party by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ). Notably, the Democratic Party brass and local chieftains like Al Sharpton and Charles Schumer, who staunchly defended the right of the racist killers of the Ku Klux Klan to rally in New York in October 1999, did little to fight for the right of anti-RNC protesters to march and rally. That's because the Democratic Party is foursquare behind the "war on terror" and is running Kerry for the White House as a better bet than Bush to front for the U.S. occupation slaughterhouse in Iraq and related attacks on labor, blacks, immigrants and civil liberties at home.

In political opposition to the pro-Democratic Party politics of the August 29 march, and against the craven role of cop auxiliaries played by UFPJ marshals who ordered the crowd to disperse without rallying, the Spartacist League intervened with a counterposed program, calling to break from the Democratic Party of war and racism and forge a workers party to fight for socialist revolution. We joined others in breaking the ban on rallies in Central Park, raising a banner there as well.

The Partisan Defense Committee prepared an *amicus* brief against the ban on protest in Central Park, but was unable to file it because the plaintiff, United for Peace and Justice, did not appeal the court's ruling. The PDC brief stated: "The context and underlying pretext for the City's blatant denial of Plaintiff's free speech rights under the First Amendment and Article I of the New York Constitution is the so-called 'war on terror' declared following the criminal attack on the World Trade Center three years ago. A package of repressive legislation and executive orders, centered on the *USA-Patriot Act*, has granted the government unprecedented powers to obliterate the rights of anyone it chooses by invoking 'security' concerns and labeling opponents as 'terrorists.' ... Through its intimidation tactics, the City is trying to frighten people from protesting against not only the City's own attempts to strip away civil rights but also the escalating attacks on democratic rights via the *USA-Patriot Act*, which was passed with bipartisan support. That the ultimate targets of the 'war against terrorism' are perceived political opponents of government policy and the labor movement is ever more apparent."

Even something as basic as defending rights that are supposedly protected by the Constitution requires an understanding that the capitalist state and its partner parties, the Democrats as well as the Republicans, are the class enemy of workers and the oppressed. Continuing to kowtow to the Democrats even as hundreds languished in jail, UFPJ called a

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Spartacus Youth Club Events

NEW YORK

Class Series
Tuesday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m.
From Protest to Power—Students and Working-Class Struggle
Also: Report on graduate student strike at Columbia by campus worker who lost job for supporting strike
Columbia University
325 Pupin Hall
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail:nysl@compuserve.com

CHICAGO

Meet the Marxists
Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6 p.m.
University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Ave.
For more information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

Visit the ICL Web Site: www.icl-fi.org

BAY AREA

Video Showing
Wednesday, Sept. 22, 4 p.m.
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
City College San Francisco
Cloud Hall, Room C349
For more information (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sfsyc@sfsu.edu

TORONTO

Class Series
Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6:30 p.m.
U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!
Canadian Troops Out of Afghanistan!
For Socialist Revolution to End Imperialist War!
York University Student Centre
room to be announced
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartacan@on.aibn.com

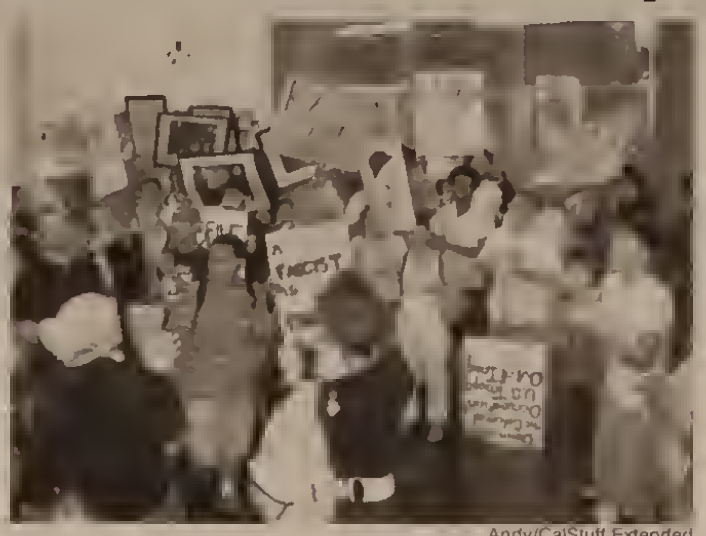
VANCOUVER

Class Series
Wednesday, Sept. 22
Free Tuition and Open Admissions!
Students Ally with Labour!
Time and place to be announced
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353
or e-mail: TLLT@look.ca

SYC Protests Racist Ideologue Malkin at UC Berkeley

On Wednesday, September 8, the Spartacus Youth Club joined about 150 students and others in a protest initiated by the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition (BSTWC) against racist ideologue Michelle Malkin, who was speaking in Dwinelle Hall at the University of California at Berkeley. Malkin was invited by the Berkeley College Republicans (BCR) and the *California Patriot* to promote her book, *In Defense of Internment: The Case for "Racial Profiling" in World War II and the War on Terror*.

Michael Smith/Daily Californian


Andy/CalStuff Extended

LBL and SL signs at anti-Malkin protest at Berkeley. Right: Protesters outside room where Malkin was speaking.

Malkin grotesquely justifies the racist internment of over 110,000 Japanese Americans. Today the "war on terror" is an ever-present, all-encompassing pretext for bipartisan attacks on immigrants, blacks and labor. Malkin wants to deepen the government witchhunt against Arab Americans and Muslims.

We set up a picket line, chanting, "Racist round-ups—we say no! The whole damn system's got to go!" The International Socialist Organization, the leadership of the BSTWC and water boys of the campaign of capitalist politician Ralph Nader, struggled to keep the demonstration comfortably liberal. They tried to drown out our speech and chants that speak to working-class struggle and the need to overthrow the capitalist system with liberal chants like "Malkin—Shame! BCR—Shame!" Eventually protesters moved inside the building and began chanting loudly outside the closed doors of the room where Malkin was speaking.

Marxists understand that it is necessary to protest racist ideologues like Malkin in order to refute their lies. However, our aim is not just to expose reactionary ideas, but to change reality. The only way to uproot the imperialist system that breeds racism is to build a multiracial workers party that fights to end all oppression through socialist revolution, raising the call for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and leaving racists like Malkin quaking in their boots.

Bill Cosby...

(continued from page 12)

called Spit. And I can spit in a bottle and sell it." Cosby is a true believer in the "magic of the market." But it is within this capitalist market that "you've got a problem," not the 'hood.

The new popularization of the "N" word is encouraged and promoted by America's racist rulers by all means at their disposal, above all the capitalist market. The main revenues of the "gangsta rap" industry, shameless promoters of the "N" word, are generated in the white suburbs. The ideological campaign to "reclaim" the "N" word as a "term of endearment" is promoted by black intellectual apologists safely nestled in the universities.

The "N" word bluntly defines the race-color caste oppression of American blacks—oppressed as a people regardless of class. The Coshy family has direct experience with the "N" word as the cutting edge of racist reaction. In 1998, on the day after the conviction of the racist thug who murdered her son, Ennis, Camille Cosby, Bill's wife, wrote a courageous *USA Today* commentary titled, "America Taught My Son's Killer to Hate Blacks" (8 July 1998). She wrote, "All African-Americans, regardless of their educational and economic accomplishments, have been and are at risk in America simply because of their skin colors. Sadly, my family and I experienced that to be one of America's racial truths." She described how her son, Ennis Cosby, heir to a fortune, was murdered in a "middle- to upper-middle-income, predominately white community" by a white racist thug who boasted, "I shot a n----r. It's all over the news." A howl of right-wing protest answered Camille Cosby's simple statement of "America's racial truths," repeatedly reminding the Cosbys of the class position awarded them.

Racist ideologue David Horowitz led the mob, penning a widely circulated hit piece titled "Mrs. Cosby's Racial Paranoia." With great venom he wrote, "What can be said about a mother who exploits the tragic death of her own son to deliver a racist diatribe against a nation that has showered her with privilege, making her family wealthy and famous beyond the wildest dreams of almost anyone alive...?" Though Julian Bond, then president of the NAACP, rose to her defense, he was the rare exception among black leaders. But Camille Coshy stood her ground against the mob of white racist media hit men. In a reply (posted on afrikan.net), she mentioned a "letter to the editor" she had written that the *New York Times* refused to print. She made this revealing point: the *Times* coverage of the killer's trial excluded the inflammatory epithet, n----r. Cosby wrote of the *Times* "sanitizing the word 'n----r' with 'black man' in paraphrase." Camille Coshy rendered a service to black America and the working class with these revelations. The same cannot be said of her husband.

Village Voice writer Ta-Nehisi Coates noted that the philanthropist Bill Cosby has played for some time "one ugly role that his activist friends like to ignore—patron saint of black elitists" (*Village Voice*, 26 May-1 June). Who are his "activist friends"? The NAACP Image Awards, black America's biggest awards show, is as obsessed as Coshy is with "keeping up appearances." Coates correctly observed, "The civil rights crowd has had a rough 30 years as the old tactics of marching and boycotting have come up lame. Its leaders, like Cosby himself, are in winter, and having beaten Bull Connerism, they now stand befuddled and silenced before their greatest new adversary—class." She goes on to note, "They ignore the ghetto or, when emboldened like Cosby, shit on it." For regular readers of *Workers Vanguard*, Coates only confirms what we have long said of the Democratic Party black front men and misleaders. But the class adversary is not new; it is historic. American capitalist class rule and exploitation of wage slavery are based on a foundation of what Marx called the "primitive accumulation of capital," derived from another form of class exploitation—chattel slavery. From the old slavemaster to today's capitalist, the fight for black freedom has confronted the adversary of class.

Riesterer/Oakland Tribune

Poor and working-class children condemned to underfunded, overcrowded inner-city schools. For quality, integrated education for all!

Class relations reveal themselves in many ways, one of which is how different classes and social strata use the common language of political economy—within the U.S., this is English. At last year's Emmy awards, when he was asked what accounted for his and other early black comics' success, an annoyed Cosby replied, "We spoke English." But Coshy seeks to distance himself from the Black English (Ebonics) dialect of his early comic characters. With a net worth of some $500 million, Cosby is fond of referring to the oppressed black masses trapped in the ghetto as a "lower economic area," "lower economic people," etc. But what intimately connects Cosby with these "lower economic people" is the special race-color caste oppression of American blacks—the anti-black racism targeting all blacks as a people regardless of class. This oppression is based on skin color and finds many social expressions, above all in language, the Black English dialect. It is this dialect that Cosby hates so intensely.

The demagogue Cosby cannot shed his skin, but he can denigrate a dialect that he shares with all classes of American blacks. John McWhorter, Cosby defender and author of *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America*, candidly revealed this truth: "Bill Cosby speaks more ebonics than he knows..., and people don't want to hear it. It's not their favorite flavor" (*Oakland Tribune*, 8 August). The Black English dialect is the most reviled dialect of American English, yet linguistic studies reveal that this same dialect has by far the greatest impact of all American dialects on standard speech. Standard American English is peppered with words and phrases, such as "cool," "dude" and so on, derived from the Black English dialect.

This influence is historic as well. Charles Dickens and travelers in the pre-Civil War slaveholding South noted that the slaves had a significant effect on the speech of their white masters. One such traveler wrote: "It must be confessed, to the shame of the White population of the South, that they perpetuate many of these pronunciations in common with their Negro dependents" (Robert McCrum, *The Story of English* [Viking Penguin, 1986]). This is all evidence of the race-color caste oppression of American blacks. American blacks are the most American of Americans, shaping culture past and present. But with blacks forcibly segregated on the bottom of American society, their contributions and influences are met with loathsome rejection and denial.

The "soft target" for anti-black racism today is the "Hip-Hop culture" of black ghetto youth and its reflection in Black English. During a May 26 interview with NPR reporter Tavis Smiley, Cosby remarked, "It's a new language in the area, and it's only good for the people you come in contact [*sic*] living in that area. It's no good on Wall Street." Smiley pointed out that Cosby's comic characters, Fat Albert and Mush Mouth, "weren't speaking perfect English." But this irony was lost on Cosby, who responded, "Hey, man, I'm a millionaire." Remarking on Cosby's state of mind, black comic Dave Chappelle said, "no one is as uncomfortable as a black man with money." Indeed Cosby seems obsessed with his image of a black millionaire. Coates of the *Village Voice* speculated that "whenever he walked into a cocktail party and a stuffed shirt made a joke about Ebonics, his self-image crumpled from the hit."

In this spirit in 1997 Cosby wrote an anti-black satirical opinion piece, "Elements of Igno-Ebonics Style," in the *Wall Street Journal* (10 January 1997), the major mouthpiece of U.S. financial capital. Cosby's ostensible target was the Oakland, California School Board, which had passed a controversial resolution to teach black youth standard English using Ebonics. It was a ploy to squeeze more funding for the financially starved school district. As we stated at the time ("Desperation, Segregation and the 'Ebonics' Controversy," *WV* No. 660, 24 January 1997): "There *should* be programs that

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Bill Cosby...

(continued from page 7)

can provide a bridge in teaching these kids what is called 'standard American English,' without disparaging or demeaning their home dialect, for the simple reason that to get anywhere in this society you need to speak the language of the political economy."

Bill Cosby's article was simply his contribution to the storm of racist reaction, the flood of derisive imitations of "black speech" parroting every vile racist stereotype. This vicious response showed why Black English as spoken by the current generation of ghetto youth is the language of despair and defiance of a society they know doesn't give a damn about them.

In the May 26 NPR interview, Smiley remarked that some have called Cosby's remarks "rooted in generational warfare." Cosby responds, "Might be generational warfare if they want war." Bill Cosby, "America's father," hates black ghetto youth and the language they speak—this is his message to his Wall Street friends. To someone like Cosby, nothing stands in the way of black youth moving forward except themselves; Cosby's demeaning and disparaging attacks on Ebonics reflect his contempt for the ghetto poor.

Cosby's threat of war is not idle; he has many influential defenders and friends. Russell Simmons, organizer of the pro-Democratic Party "Hip-Hop Team Vote," got a call from Nation of Islam minister Louis Farrakhan. Farrakhan's message was that in the work of lining up black youth as Democratic voting cattle, Cosby should be treated "like a father." The black left personified in Cornel West and Michael Eric Dyson genuflect to "Dr. Cosby" before and after each tepid criticism. In interviews with Smiley, West announced that Cosby was "acknowledging the humanity of black people," while Dyson said, "if anybody has earned his ability to say what he has to say, it's Mr. Cosby." Former president Bill Clinton—who threw thousands of poor off the welfare rolls into homelessness and under whose administration unprecedented numbers of black youth were jailed—proclaimed, "Cosby did a service to black America and to all Americans." In a commentary, "Bill Cosby and the Flap That Wasn't," CBSNews.com's editorial director reported that he managed to find three black columnists who wrote "rather mild rebuffs of Cosby," but that after Cosby called one up, he "wrote a second column further qualifying his already qualified gibes."

Why is Bill Cosby so untouchable? He is a black American icon that has served well the ideological needs of America's racist rulers. Disappearing the seething black ghetto masses, *The Cosby Show*'s Huxtable family lived a model upper-middle-class existence few American blacks—or working-class whites—have ever known. They were palatable across race lines, addressing all the standard sitcom topics. The show avoided controversy, including race. In an earlier show with Tavis Smiley, Cosby described one high point of controversy. One Huxtable child had a sign on his bedroom door: "Abolish Apartheid." Some network people objected to the sign. Cosby, the much-touted anti-apartheid activist, stood his ground, "it was not even a second thought. It wasn't even a clenched fist.... It was just very, very simple: If you take the sign down, there's no show." Cosby noted also, "that was at the peak of the apartheid going down quickly, and Mandela being released from jail." The black African working class, with blood and sacrifice, smashed apartheid, and, with the deed just about done, the tepid liberal Cosby feels safe to defend a sign. But what made the Huxtable home was not the bedroom sign, but the "warm and fuzzy" house where, according to a Roper poll, one-third of America would most like to live.

AP

Two generations of misleaders: Jesse Jackson Sr. with Barack Obama.

Cosby is also an important Democratic Party supporter, backing the candidacies of several black Democratic pols, including Maxine Waters and Jesse Jackson Jr. At a 1999 fund-raiser for Al Gore's presidential race Cosby held up for the amusement of his well-heeled audience the autographed size 22 shoe of Los Angeles Lakers all-star Shaquille O'Neal. There were no nasty remarks about weird names and expensive basketball shoes now. This shoe and name helped raise $250,000 for Al Gore's coffers. This election year, Al Sharpton and black Congressional caucus members met with Cosby on September 8 in a show of support for Cosby's diatribes (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 September).

San Francisco Bay View writer Khalil Tian Shahyd was close to the mark when she complained that Cosby's assertions are taken as fact: "This is part of the media selection of our voices, of those who represent and interpret our reality—which is why Al Sharpton feels he can run for president, why Jesse Jackson dares to come outside anymore. Because they are chosen by those outside our communities to speak for us" (*San Francisco Bay View*, 14 July). They are chosen by America's capitalist rulers. They are beholden to the Democratic Party and big money men such as Bill Cosby.

But what was visited first on the black population is now becoming an increasing reality for all workers in America. This fact underscores the depth of treachery of the labor movement's official misleaders, whose allegiance to the Democratic Party goes hand in hand with their acceptance of the racist status quo. The situation cries out for a class-struggle fight for all workers and the poor, a fight that can link the power of labor to the anger of the ghettos. This is the perspective of revolutionary integrationism. In order to change the systematic denigration and degradation of black youth trapped in ever more hellish conditions, their labor power and their thinking power has to be truly valued. To achieve that requires shattering the entire system of racist American capitalism. This is the urgent task of a much-needed, multiracial revolutionary workers party.■

Protesters...

(continued from page 6)

rally outside Pier 57, politely asking only that the police speed up the processing of those arrested and improve jail conditions! To call on the capitalist state to hurry up already with the arrest process of people who are guilty of no crime is obscene! In so doing, UFPJ played dangerously into the hands of the capitalist state, its cops and its courts, which seek to criminalize dissent. The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee raised placards at the protest outside Pier 57 to demand the immediate release of all RNC protesters. *Drop all the charges!*

Callous Disregard for Workers' Lives

A few courageous and creative activists from ACT UP and Code Pink grabbed the limelight by taking their protest message right inside the convention and/or by flashing the holy delegates with naked bodies painted with slogans against Bush outside Madison Square Garden. *Workers Vanguard* spoke with Barnard College student Mary Bruch, who was arrested and charged with felony assault (since reduced to a misdemeanor) and felony incitement to riot for participating in a protest during the RNC's pitch to youth. She said the Republicans are so hard up for the youth vote that it was easy to slip in. No questions were asked if you were dressed in a twin-set and pumps or blue blazer. When Bruch and others stood and stripped off their Republican drag to reveal red T-shirts reading, "Bush lies. Stop AIDS. Drop the debt now," the Secret Service and Republican delegates responded with violence. Protesters were knocked to the ground and kicked repeatedly. One Young Republican was captured on ABC News kicking a young woman who had already been thrown to the ground.

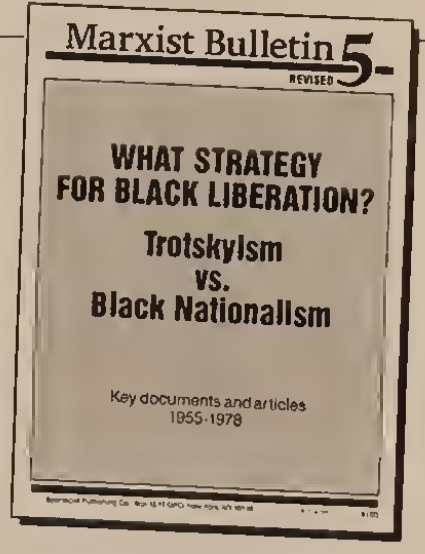
Hauled off to Pier 57 and locked in a 10-foot by 8-1/2-foot cage with ten others (some protesters were packed 30 to a cage), Bruch was questioned at least four times by the Secret Service and the NYPD, yet was never once read her rights. Bruch described the conditions as "degrading" and said one police officer told her, "You have no rights, you're in jail." Bruch told *Workers Vanguard*, "I know that's not true, but they threw out the rules and rewrote the Constitution to suit the Republicans." Bruch wondered whether the violations of supposedly constitutionally protected rights were because of the USA-Patriot Act and whether protesters were deemed "enemy combatants."

Workers Vanguard tracked down the story on the hazardous conditions inside Pier 57, an old bus barn turned into an RNC hust barn. *WV* spoke with Jay Bermudez, the last shop steward for Transport Workers Union Local 100 at Pier 57. Bermudez said the place is "full of asbestos," it's "all over the depot, all over the ceiling" and was "never abated." The pier has no windows and no ventilation. When transit workers complained about the unsafe conditions, the Transit Authority bosses stalled with the line that the location was "only temporary." Finally, after a fire broke out in 1994, asbestos was exposed and the TA was forced to begin abating it—*while 500 workers toiled beneath!* According to Bermudez, the asbestos abatement program was never completed. In addition, Bermudez says that there is *no fire suppression system* (pipes burst last year because the pier was unheated), *no fire alarm*, and lead paint chips are all over the place.

The hundreds of protesters packed into cages on Pier 57 could have perished in a terrible fire and many are likely to have health problems as a result of exposure to hazardous substances. But this is *normal* "business as usual" for the capitalists and their state—transit workers labored in these conditions from 1972 to 2003. The lives of workers mean nothing at all to the bosses except for the surplus value which can be extracted from their labor. Lest anyone think that the Democrats are "friends of labor," it was mainly under Democratic Party city administrations that transit workers labored in these unsafe conditions.

The Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club seek to win protesters who took risks and came out to demonstrate during the RNC—and everyone fed up with the Iraq war and the rollback of black rights, women's rights, immigrant rights, union-busting, etc.—to the understanding that the Democrats represent the same ruling class as the Republicans. Nothing fundamental will change by alternating one party of capitalist rule with another. What's necessary is to build a completely different kind of party, a class-struggle workers party that fights for a thoroughgoing socialist revolution!

Donations for the legal defense of the arrested RNC protesters can be sent to: New York City Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, 143 Madison Ave, 4th floor, New York, NY 10016. Earmark checks "RNC Mass Defense Fund."■



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Japan...

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have the social power necessary to fight for their emancipation. The overthrow of the capitalist order through workers revolution will open the way for the elimination of all oppression and exploitation. It is only the abundance of a worldwide planned economy that will enable us to replace the oppressive institution of the family with socialized domestic service, freeing women to fully participate in social and political life.

Marxism vs. Reformism

Because we understand that women will never be liberated or equal under capitalism, does that mean that we do nothing between now and the time of a socialist revolution? Does that mean that Marxists do not support or fight for reforms that would make the situation just a little bit better?

Marxists recognize that struggles for bourgeois-democratic rights are of great importance to the proletariat. We recognize the struggle for reforms, which are measures that improve the conditions of the working people without destroying the power of the capitalist ruling class. For example, we are in favor of and fight for legislation that would allow couples to choose whatever name they want after marriage. We support the right of people to decide how to divide their goods after their death. We oppose all legislation that discriminates against children born outside of a marriage. We fight against all discrimination against homosexuals. We defend the right of people to change their sex if they so want. We defend the right of gay people to marry.

None of these measures challenge the very base of the capitalist economic system. And all are possible under capitalism. But as long as capitalism continues to exist, reforms cannot be enduring or far-reaching. Workers fight for better conditions and use reforms to intensify the fight against wage slavery. Marxists utilize reforms to develop and broaden the class struggle.

At the same time, we wage a most resolute fight against reformism which directly or indirectly restricts the aims and activities of the working class to only the winning of reforms. Reformism is bourgeois deception of the workers, who, despite individual and temporary improvements, will always remain wage slaves as long as there is the domination of capital. It is in the nature of capitalism to raise the rate of exploitation in order to maximize profits. The oppression of women, unemployment, racism and wars are integral to the workings of the capitalist economic system.

Oppose Capitalist Counterrevolution and "Market Reforms"!

The struggle for women's rights has assumed particular political importance since the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe. The early Soviet Republic attempted under Lenin and Trotsky's leadership to free women from domestic bondage through communalizing childcare and daily household tasks. Laws against homosexuality and abortion were struck down, and divorce made simple. But the abolition of the repressive family institution only begins with a socialist revolution. The family cannot be abolished by decree but must be replaced. Under conditions of scarcity in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia, devastated by civil war and imperialist invasions, the material resources were lacking. With the ascension to power of the Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the early gains for women were abolished and the family was hailed as a "fighting unit for socialism" to reinforce obedience to the authoritarian bureaucracy. Seven decades of bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state culminated in capitalist counterrevolution. The return of the imperialist "freemarket" has unleashed an aggressive attack against the rights won by women and the workers movement through the proletarian conquest of state power.

In Asia, the ravages of "market socialism" can be most graphically seen in China. Before the 1949 Chinese Revolution, just as in Japan, the systematic oppression of women was integral to the Confucian code of conduct, which mandated loyalty to father, husband and the emperor. Most women in China didn't even have a name. It was their fate to be sold into marriage. Young girls suffered the agony of having their feet broken and bound. Permanently maimed, the mass of women were cut off from any role in social production and locked into the home to act as household slaves and sexual toys for their husbands. The overthrow of capitalist rule laid the basis for hundreds of millions of women to achieve enormous advances. Stalinist rule, with its bureaucratic deformations, poverty and social backwardness in the Chinese deformed workers state, is incapable of achieving the liberation of women, even the gains that women have won are now under increasing attack as female infanticide and kidnapping for prostitution and forced marriages are on the rise. In the words of Marx, all the old crap is returning. Just as we fought against capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and East Europe, we fight against the imperialist incursions in the remaining deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. The Stalinist bureaucracies have gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. These bureaucrats must be swept away by a proletarian political revolution, replacing the bureaucracy's political rule with workers democracy.

Socialist Revolution Is Only Solution to Crisis of Capitalism

In addition, growing rivalries between the imperialist countries and the capitalists' drive to increase profits through intensified exploitation have fueled a reactionary social climate in which basic rights are increasingly targeted for restriction or elimination. The attempts to rewrite Japanese imperialism's racist, brutal war in the Pacific, to label the *ianfu* ["comfort women" enslaved by the Japanese military during World War II] as prostitutes, and the enforcement of the *hinomaru* and *kimigayo* [the national flag and anthem] are part of the bourgeoisie's attempts to ideologically prepare the working class for the next imperialist slaughter.

VAAP

Petrograd, March 1917: Women at demonstration in support of workers soviets (councils) raise banner demanding eight-hour workday. Demonstrations by women workers were first spark of 1917 Russian Revolution.

As the recession deepens and unemployment soars, women workers are the first fired and the last hired. The workplace is where the fight for women's liberation intersects the proletariat's fight for emancipation from wage slavery. Defending the right of women to work is not an abstract task for the future, but an integral part of the fight for socialist revolution. Central to the defense of women and minority workers is the abolition of the arbiter work system (part-time contract workers) and the organization of common industrial unions that will fight for equal pay and equal access to technical training and job upgrading. We call for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay and for free, 24-hour childcare.

Among the results of a union misleadership that won't fight for women's rights are weak unions that don't defend any of their members and an uncontested misogynist climate in society as a whole. The current reformist leadership accepts the bourgeoisie's outlook that working women are only a temporary aberration and should be treated differently from men, i.e., with lower pay, few benefits and no union protection. What is necessary is to oust the sellout leadership of all three union federations and organize the entire working class—Japanese, minority and immigrant, men and women—in a common struggle.

The working class must also fight against the growing social climate, brought about by the economic recession, that reinforces traditional family values. We say: Down with the retrogressive attempts to get women to have more children. We call for free abortion on demand and for full access to free and safe contraceptives. We demand billions of yen for medical research to fight AIDS and demand the end to discriminatory treatment of HIV-positive and AIDS patients.

There is enormous resentment against the rigid feudal-derived hierarchy weighing upon present-day Japanese society. Recent surveys have found that more than half the women in their 20s are not married, and have no plans to do so. Young women are refusing to use women's language and instead have adopted words formerly used only by men. This is the solution that some have opted for in their struggle to achieve equality in an arrogant, male-chauvinist society. These individual acts of rebellion, while refreshing, at bottom do not challenge the fundamental root of women's oppression.

Real human dignity and equality can only come about through the collective ownership of the means of production—the steel mills, railroads, auto plants. Then the allocation of resources will be according to human need and not according to profits made in *Otemachi* [financial center of Tokyo]. There is no way that capitalism can be reformed sufficiently to accommodate women's liberation. Since the institution of the family is an integral part of the capitalist system, the struggle for women's liberation cannot be achieved under capitalism.

Those who would build a multiethnic Leninist-Trotskyist party must see the emancipation of women as central to a proletarian, socialist revolution. Our call for a workers republic combines the tasks of emancipating the working class from wage slavery and the necessity of sweeping away all the social rot left over from feudalism, such as the abolition of the emperor system. This is the kind of party we are fighting to build, part of an international communist movement inspired by the liberating program of revolutionary Bolshevism. ■

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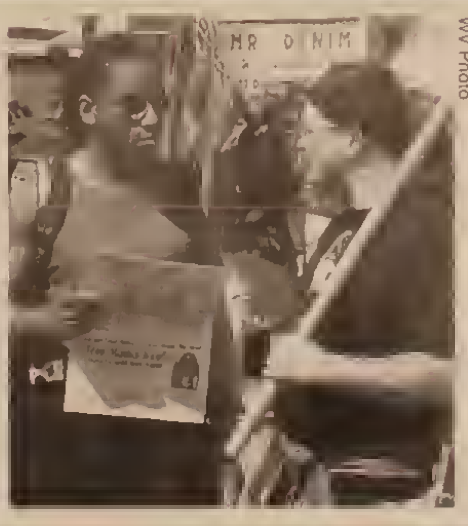

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Elections...

(continued from page 1)

The capitalist class owns the means of production; in turn, the working class, in order to survive, is forced to sell its labor power to the capitalists, and through its labor generates the surplus value that the capitalists reap as profit. The working class is the only objectively revolutionary class in capitalist society: it has its hands directly on the means of production—the factories, mines, transportation systems of modern industrial capitalism—and the social power and interest to overthrow capitalism.

The fundamental problem, though, is political consciousness. It is commonplace for American workers to identify themselves as "middle class." This bourgeois ideology, or false consciousness, is transmitted to the working class by the conservative pro-capitalist AFL-CIO officialdom. It is reinforced by ostensible socialists who give open or backhanded support to the Democratic Party and capitalist politicians like Ralph Nader as "lesser evils" or "realistic" choices.

Whatever rhetoric they put forward, every capitalist politician—whether they be Democrat, Republican or Green—serves and pursues the interests of the capitalists and their system of exploitation. Fundamentally, the government under capitalism is nothing but the executive committee of the bourgeoisie, serving to manage the affairs of the capitalist rulers. To defend its rule, the bourgeoisie has its own capitalist state—its cops, courts, prisons, military—that uses both force and deception to maintain the rule of capital.

Democracy under capitalism is nothing but democracy for the capitalist rulers. It is the means by which the bourgeoisie disguises its rule with the appearance of a popular mandate, and maintains its deception of those who oppose its systematic violence. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin captured it in his 1917 work, *The State and Revolution*, "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism."

Because the bourgeoisie not only controls the media, schools and political life of the country, but also the "special bodies of armed men," as Lenin called the apparatus of the capitalist state, capitalism can never be voted out of office. The capitalist state—an institution of violence against working people and the oppressed—can never be made to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. It has to be smashed through a workers revolution that puts in place of the capitalist state a new and different kind of state: a workers state based on a planned and collectivized economy in which production serves to satisfy human need rather than capitalist profit. The establishment of proletarian rule—in the U.S. and internationally—will lay the material basis for the rational expansion of production and the elimination of scarcity, allowing for an unprecedented development of human freedom in all spheres.

The struggle for socialist liberation requires above all the building of a workers party to educate the working class about its historic role as the gravedigger of capitalism and to lead it to power—a revolutionary workers party whose primary arena is not the ballot box, but the shop floor, the picket line and the street.

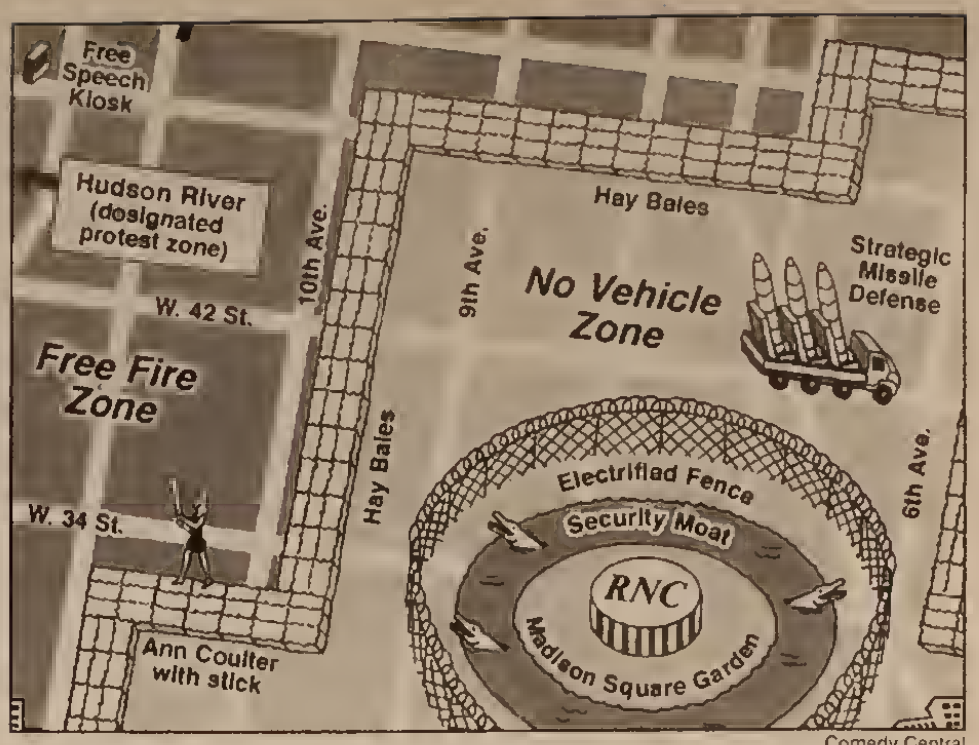
For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

It would be false to say that there is no difference between the Democrats and Republicans. But the difference is one of style rather than content. The Republicans seem to revel in seeing and inflicting suffering on working people and the oppressed; in turn, the Democrats put on a more kindly face, posture as "friends" of labor and blacks, all the better to deceive the working people in order to give a more popular and democratic facade to pursuing essentially the same policies as the Republicans.

In that context, the role of "progressive" Democrats like Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, Cynthia McKinney and others is to head off and contain any potential social struggle, keeping it safely within the confines of the capitalist system. This was clearly displayed during the antiwar movement, for example. While most Democrats in Congress voted for the war, just about every major demonstration organized by fake-Marxist outfits and their coalitions—like Workers World Party and its International ANSWER coalition—was tailored to provide a platform for "progressive" Democrats. These Democrats (and the "socialists" who promoted them) did everything to bill the Iraq war as simply "Bush's war" and to advocate "regime change" at home (i.e., voting Democrat) to the millions who came out to protest the war.

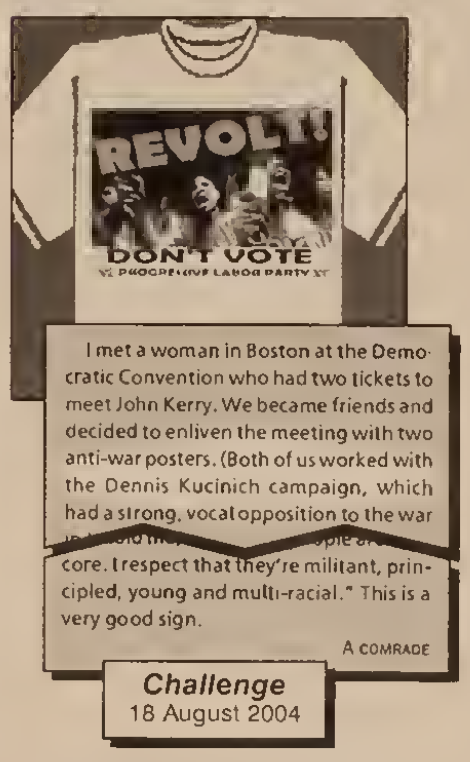
But the horrors inflicted upon the Iraqi masses through war and occupation—like U.S. helicopter gunships firing missiles on Iraqis gathered around an attacked American armored vehicle on September 12, a deliberate act of mass murder and collective punishment against civilians—are not simply the products of a deranged American government. They are an expression of the very workings of capitalist imperialism, the competition for resources and "spheres of influence" between the major imperialist powers, and, consequently, the raping and bleeding of semicolonial countries like Iraq.

Meanwhile, the role played by "third party" candidates like Ralph Nader is to legitimize the American capitalist electoral system in the eyes of the many disillusioned youth and others, and, as Nader himself has repeatedly made clear, to steer the Democrats in a more "progressive" direction. Ralph Nader is a bourgeois politician who neither calls nor pretends to call for ending capitalism, only for giving breaks to "little capitalists" against "big capitalists."



Comedy Central

Cartoon from advertisement for *Daily Show*.



PL T-shirt says: "Revolt! Don't Vote," while letter from "A Comrade" to *Challenge* brags about working in Democrat Kucinich's campaign.

In principle, Marxists will not give any political support to any capitalist party or politician because that would mean joining the bourgeoisie in deceiving the workers and further tying the workers to their class enemy. At the same time, Marxists are not indifferent or opposed to participating in elections. In opposition to comrades in the then-revolutionary Socialist Workers Party who wanted to support the 1948 presidential campaign of Henry Wallace (a capitalist politician dripping with populist rhetoric), Cannon outlined a Marxist approach to bourgeois elections in the same 1948 speech quoted earlier:

> "We proceed from a principled line. The basic aim of our principled line is to assist the development of independent political action by the workers and turn it towards a revolutionary culmination.
>
> "There is the reformist conception that a labor party, by its very nature, must necessarily be a reformist party, and that reformism is a necessary and inevitable stage of the development of a working class political movement. Against this is the Marxist conception that a reformist stage of working class politics is not necessary and not preferable; we do not advocate that the workers pass through a stage of reformism on the road to revolutionary Marxist politics."

Here in the U.S., there has never been a mass workers party. The American ruling class has been highly effective in exploiting deep divisions within the proletariat, first along religious and ethnic lines and later along racial lines. Segregated at the bottom of society yet integrated into the economy, constituting a key component of the working class, black workers are a doubly-oppressed race-color caste. Black oppression is the bedrock of American capitalism. If it is to fight for its own emancipation, the multiracial proletariat must take up the struggle for black freedom. Black rights and labor rights will either go forward together or fall back separately. The working class will transcend its division only through class and social struggle. Socialism in the U.S. will be achieved only by the common struggle of the multiracial working class under the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard party.

Every gain working people have made in this country was wrested through hard struggle. To hold onto and expand these gains means politically combating the current pro-capitalist union leadership, which in a thousand ways impedes class struggle by tying the working masses to the capitalist order, primarily through support to the Democrats. It will be through the struggles of working people that a new class-struggle leadership will be forged in the unions. From the militant strike waged by UFCW grocery workers earlier this year to the potential strike by hotel workers on the West Coast and Washington, D.C., there is a palpable sense among workers and the oppressed that they have to fight to defend their livelihoods and better their conditions of life. The question is one of educating the working class that it must not only fight against expressions of its exploitation, but to overthrow the very capitalist system that breeds its exploitation.

For us, the call to break with the Democrats and build a workers party is not just words but the guideline for politically independent class-struggle action. Exemplary actions initiated by the Spartacist League, Labor Black Leagues and Partisan Defense Committee are powerful examples of the kind of fighting workers party we seek to build. We built the 9 February 2002 united-front protest against the Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act in Oakland, California—the first union-centered demonstration in the U.S. against the anti-labor and anti-immigrant "war on terror" after September 11. On 23 October 1999, while Democrat Al Sharpton fought for a permit for the race-hate terrorists of the KKK to rally in Manhattan, we initiated the mass mobilization of several thousand opponents of KKK terror around a proletarian core of support. Actions like these give workers and youth a taste of the potential for victory when one is unshackled from ruling class parties.

"Anybody But Bush" Reformists

In keeping with the "Anybody but Bush" sentiment so shamelessly pushed by the reformist left during the antiwar demonstrations, most ostensibly socialist organizations have failed to draw even the crudest class line in these elections, and have instead acted as the best builders of "Anybody but Bushism." For Socialist Alternative and the International Socialist Organization (ISO), this means signing on to the Nader/Camejo campaign—in the case of the ISO, only recently openly after some initial coyness on the question. While Nader makes no secret of the fact that he is not anti-capitalist, his running mate is a "progressive" stockbroker whose political career took him from the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) through several unsavory incarnations until he gave up the ghost to any "socialist" pretensions altogether. Even the ISO, which supported Nader in 2000, admits: "There are reasons for the left [to] be critical of Ralph Nader—his courting of the right-wing Reform Party's endorsement, for example" (*Socialist Worker* Online, 10 September). Yet in the same article, the ISO writes: "A vote for Nader is the best way to say no to the evil of the Bush agenda, in both its greater and lesser forms—and to contribute to the building of a future political alternative."

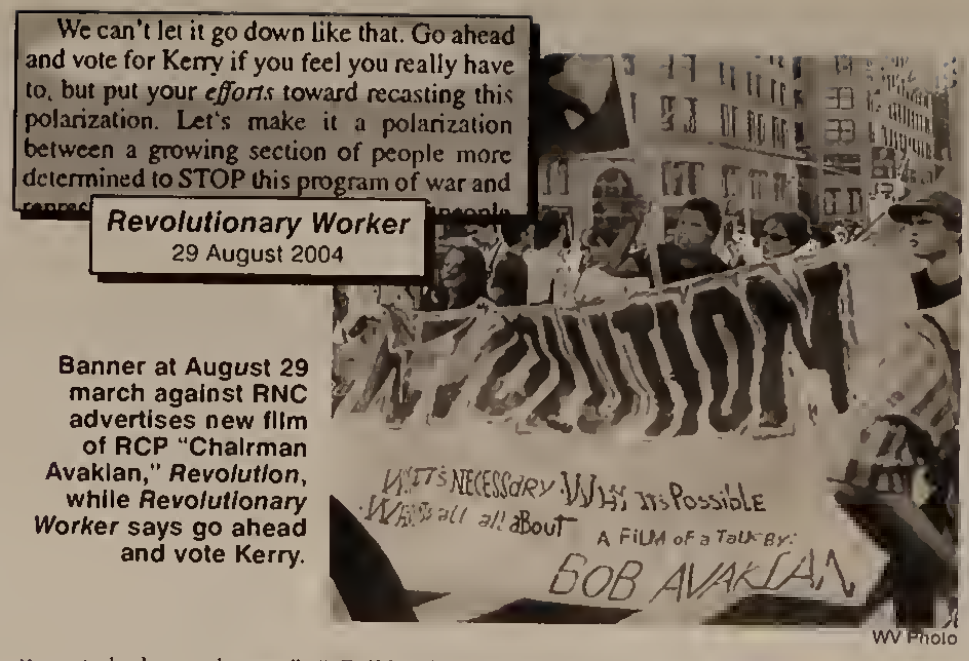
There are times when a revolutionary communist organization can offer critical support in an election—but only to an organization in the workers movement, never to a bourgeois candidate. There are times when Marxists can choose to run their own candidates in elections, as we have in the past, in order to take advantage of the heightened political interest during election time to gain a hearing for our program. But Marxists are opposed in principle to taking an executive office (like president)—i.e., to the administration of the bourgeois state apparatus. We run on a program for socialist revolution as the only solution to the exploitation and racial oppression inherent in capitalist society.

In countries where mass reformist workers parties exist, a small communist organization might, under certain circumstances, call for a vote to such a party in order to show workers with illusions in that party that once in power, it would defend the interests of the capitalists and not the workers. Lenin described the tactic of critical support as offering "support...in the same way as a rope supports a hanged man." In the U.S., where there is no such party, we have sometimes advocated critical support to a candidate in the workers movement whose electoral program in some key way represents a break with capitalist rule. In the current election, none of the left groups running their own candidates

merit even savagely critical support.

The Workers World Party (WWP) is fielding John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez, who are running on a vague program to further "mass action and class struggle." WWP states: "These two working-class candidates will be running against the pro-war, pro-intervention, pro-big business politics of George W. Bush and John Kerry" (*Workers World*, 3 June). But this lip service to some opposition to both capitalist parties was belied by WWP's work through their ANSWER coalition in the antiwar movement where they actively courted Democratic politicians. Most recently, WWP urged a vote to "progressive" Georgia Democrat Cynthia McKinney. A July 22 editorial in *Workers World* gushes: "Workers World Party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez, send Cynthia McKinney heartiest well-wishes for victory!" So much for WWP's "independent" campaign, a campaign virtually disappeared by WWP itself at the RNC protests, the better to blend in with the "Anybody but Bush" crowd.

We are not calling for a vote to the SWP either, whose quirky reformist program along with its nominal existence do not make it a particularly appetizing prospect. During the California recall elections last year, we did apply the tactic of critical support to the SWP's gubernatorial candidate because, as we explained: "The SWP's election platform, which presents, in however crude a way, a working-class line, allows us to make concrete and clear-cut our opposition to Davis while at the same time expressing our opposition to the Republicans' attempted electoral coup" ("California: Vote Yes to Recall Davis! No Vote to Capitalist Parties!" *WV* No. 810, 26 September 2003). There is no such merit to advancing such a tactic in this presidential election.



Banner at August 29 march against RNC advertises new film of RCP "Chairman Avakian," *Revolution*, while *Revolutionary Worker* says go ahead and vote Kerry.

WV Photo

We Spartacists are not alone in refusing to call for a vote to any of the candidates in the elections; both the RCP and Progressive Labor Party (PL) have the same position in the pages of their respective newspapers. However their radical-sounding rhetoric masks reformist and opportunist practice. Thus, the RCP talks a lot about revolution and its youth group, the RCYB, waved red flags during the RNC protests while adulating the RCP's supreme leader, Bob Avakian. RCYBers chanted: "The earth is quakin'/Follow Bob Avakian/The empire's shakin'/Follow Bob Avakian." However, following "Chairman" Avakian led, during the anti-war movement, to the RCP's leading role in the class-collaborationist Not In Our Name (NION) coalition, no less eager than its ANSWER counterpart to promote Democratic Party politicians. To make it crystal clear, the RCP's *Revolutionary Worker* (29 August) advises: "Go ahead and vote for Kerry if you feel you really have to, but put your *efforts* toward recasting this polarization." Logic was never these Maoists' strong suit, but it should be clear this blessing to a vote to the Democrats is class betrayal.

During the RNC protests, PL was one of the few left groups that had a clearly anti-capitalist contingent with chants that drew a crude class line. PLers are sporting a T-shirt this year with the slogan: "Revolt! Don't Vote." PL also openly proclaims its desire to fight for communism and can look pretty militant in comparison with the rest of the reformist left. However, PL's posture is in flat contradiction to the work they do on the ground for capitalist candidates. The August 18 issue of *Challenge*, for example, carried a letter by "A comrade," which states that she "worked with the Dennis Kucinich campaign, which had a strong, vocal opposition to the war in Iraq." In the same issue, PL printed without comment a letter by a "Chicago Reader" criticizing Barak Obama, the black Illinois Democratic Party politician who made a big splash at the Democratic National Convention. The letter, however, goes on: "During the Senate primary race I volunteered at his South Side office." Why? "Chicago Reader" goes on to say that they'll explain later "how communists working in his campaign must deal with the contradiction of 'being in it to win it,' (one has to be among the masses to win them to PL's politics) while exposing the ruthless core of liberal fascism as the great danger to the working class." So, PL tells workers not to vote for "liberal fascists" while uncritically publishing the views of those who work in such campaigns!

A socialist program has to begin by telling the truth about this class society, the necessity for revolution. To end imperialist war, racist oppression and capitalist exploitation, there is no other way than to build a revolutionary workers party. No vote to capitalist politicians! For a class-struggle workers party to fight for a workers government! For international socialist revolution to open a new period of human freedom!■

Hotel Workers...

(continued from page 12)

and began distributing forms for workers to quit the union. They also stopped collecting union dues, which only underscores that the unions themselves should be collecting dues rather than leaving it up to the company.

The union leadership criminally kept the 2,900 union members working. In a real provocation, the Hotel Council announced in late June that they would start charging workers $10 a week for health insurance unless the union dropped demands for a two-year contract. Union members displayed real determination to fight, overwhelmingly rejecting the bosses' contract proposal. But in a real sign of weakness, the class-collaborationist UNITE HERE leadership did nothing but hold impotent rallies in front of these hotels. While these rallies were lively and spirited, they were meant to deflect the anger seething in the union ranks away from the only real way to fight the bosses' intransigence: by withholding their labor in strike action. We stand by what was once a widely recognized tradition in the labor movement: "No contract, no work!"

Wildcat Walkout Erupts

The outrage of union members got out of the grip of the union leadership and exploded on August 12 when workers from the Century Plaza and St. Regis hotels in Century City had had enough of management's arrogance. At the beginning of their shift, workers demanded to know why they were getting notices warning of the expiration of their health insurance. Dissatisfied with the bosses' response, some sat down, refusing to move until they got an answer. When the bosses ordered them to clock out, they walked out, and by 10 a.m., more than 100 workers in uniform, mostly women, were marching in front of the glitzy Century Plaza Hotel. Shaken up by this action, the Hotel Council moved to lock out the union, and only called off the lockout when Local 11's president, Maria Elena Durazo, disavowed the walkout, saying it was not sanctioned and promising no further job actions inside or in front of hotels.

While the union's demands include affordable health care, which has been on the agenda of many of the recent struggles in the labor movement, the major issue in this fight is the union's demand for a two-year contract. An important lesson of the recent grocery workers strike in Southern California was the need to extend the strike nationally in order to succeed against the supermarket bosses. While hotel workers are not a powerful industrial or transportation workforce that can bring a city to a halt, they are placed in a crucial industry, tourism, and can, with the help of other unionized workers, have a powerful effect on a city's economy.

In addition, hotel union members must understand that the fight should not just be limited to having national expiration dates. Hotel workers should fight for a common contract nationwide. This will take hard class struggle against the machinations of the current pro-Democratic Party union leadership.

Another important aspect of the contract dispute is the ethnic make-up of the workforce. Union members have expressed concerns over the significant drop in the number of blacks employed in this industry in the last 25 years. Among the proposals put forward by the union leadership in response to these concerns is a "joint committee to enhance diversity of the workforce." What they mean by a "joint committee" is collaboration between the union and the bosses. But it's the bosses themselves who foster and encourage racial divisions in order to divide and conquer the working class. Tensions between blacks and Latinos have been particularly encouraged by the L.A. bourgeoisie ever since the city erupted in a multiracial upheaval in 1992 following the acquittal of the cops who beat black motorist Rodney King. It is crucial for the union to cut across racial divisions by taking up an active struggle for jobs for all. To undercut the poisonous racism pushed by the bosses, the union must fight for a ***union hiring hall***. Labor rights, immigrant rights and black rights go forward together or they fall back separately.

Local 11 leadership's contract proposal for "fair procedures for Social Security no-match letters" from the state accepts the bourgeoisie's intrusion into the daily lives of immigrant workers. Such letters—sent to employers by the Social Security Administration when a Social Security number does not match the government's records—are routinely used to harass immigrant union militants. Rather than demanding "fair procedures," the unions should be demanding that companies that receive "no-match" letters take no action against workers. In fact, the Social Security Administration does not require that employers take any action once they receive "no-match" letters.

The national leadership of UNITE HERE is trying to tie the workers to the bosses by endorsing the Kerry campaign. Not surprisingly, Local 11 president Durazo was the national director of last year's Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride which was organized as little more than an election platform for Democrats courting Latino votes. We wrote in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 811, 10 October 2003) when it passed through Chicago:

> "The bureaucrats are not even calling for a campaign to organize immigrant workers in unions. Instead the purpose of the Freedom Ride, with buses organized nationally from California, Houston, Miami, Boston and other cities, is explicitly to pressure Congress for legislative reform, with the vague goal of promoting an open-ended 'road to citizenship' for all immigrant workers. The Freedom Ride rallies have been more like election rallies, with American flags passed out and Democratic Party speakers like Congressman Luis Gutierrez and black Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White."

Meanwhile, a key promise of John Kerry's campaign is that he will more effectively wage a "war on terror," which means an increased war against black people, immigrants and labor, and maintain the rapacious occupation of Iraq.

Workers should recall that when L.A. transit workers went on strike last year, their struggle was sold out by the likes of Miguel Contreras, head of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, working in collaboration with Democratic Party city councilman Antonio Villaraigosa and other bourgeois politicians. It is through such political support for the capitalists' parties that labor misleaders like Contreras and his wife Durazo disarm the workers movement. The government is the executive committee of the capitalist class, responsible for running its affairs. The labor tops' support for the capitalists' political parties also means support for the state that ensures capitalist class rule through force and violence against those they exploit. The capitalist state can never be reformed to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed. It must be swept away through a socialist revolution that establishes a new state, a workers state.

To go forward, the working class must mobilize its social power independent of the capitalists and their state. The labor movement must fight to ***organize the unorganized*** and for ***full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*** While in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks the hotel industry was hit hard as tourism dropped dramatically, the union is in a better position than it has been in years. This has been the first year hotel attendance has risen to former levels, and major functions are expected at these hotels through the holidays, when the industry peaks yearly. Hotel workers must go out on strike, build solid picket lines that nobody crosses and forge a common front of struggle in all cities involved. UNITE HERE workers must fight for the solidarity of other unions and workers in action, from the overwhelmingly immigrant port truckers to the courageous SEIU "Justice for Janitors" union activists.

Battles for labor are won on the picket line, not at negotiating tables or the now-time-worn diversion of masses celebrated with Cardinal Mahony. Many of the immigrant workers in the hotel industry have experience in militant class struggle and are open to internationalist ideas. A victorious strike by this workforce would go a long way toward putting a dent in the massive anti-immigrant sweeps that are part of the ruling class's "war on terror." It would break the streak of defeats labor has endured, and point the way forward to a labor offensive against this country's arrogant ruling class. Hotel workers can and must win.

What labor needs is a new class-struggle union leadership. What we need is a revolutionary workers party independent of the parties of the bosses, a party that fights for a workers government. To this task we of the Spartacist League are committed. Remember, "*¡sí se puede!*" only with picket lines that nobody crosses. *Victory to the hotel workers! Strike to win!*■

WORKERS VANGUARD

For a Solid Strike! For a National Contract!

Hotel Workers Confront Bosses' Union Busting

LOS ANGELES, September 14—Once again Los Angeles is poised to be a main arena of class struggle in the country with a looming battle between capital and labor. On September 13, hotel workers of the recently merged UNITE HERE (formerly the Union of Needletrades, Textiles and Industrial Employees and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union) Local 11 of Los Angeles and Local 25 of Washington, D.C. voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike in defense of health care and a two-year contract. As we got to press, San Francisco's Local 2 is also taking a strike authorization vote. As of tomorrow all three locals will be working without contracts. A two-year contract for these locals will enable the union to line up expiration dates in ten major cities in 2006, involving more than 60,000 workers and giving the union greater weight in dealing with national hotel chains. UNITE HERE's contract in Washington, D.C. expires on September 15, directly posing the extension of any strike that breaks out in L.A.

Ferazzi/L.A. Times

Making a point about being overworked, hotel worker makes bed during a demonstration in downtown L.A. last month.

On July 1, Los Angeles union members overwhelmingly voted down the insulting contract offer from the bosses' Los Angeles Hotel Employers Council by 92 percent. These hotels include major national chains such as Hyatt and Westin, which dominate the hotel industry. Having learned their lessons from the UFCW supermarket workers strike of last fall, nine of these hotels have entered into an agreement paralleling that of the bosses of the grocery chains: if one hotel of these nine is struck, the rest will lock out the union. The bosses' strong-arm unity must be met with the strong, united determination of the labor movement, *a solid hotel workers strike shutting down the hotels with mass pickets that no one crosses!*

Similar to SEIU and other service industry unions in the L.A. area, Local 11 is a heavily Latino and immigrant union. In the racist society that is capitalist America, immigrants, many escaping countries ravaged by U.S. imperialism, are constantly terrorized by threats of deportation, which have increased with the racist "war on terror." This has been particularly true in the last few months as massive anti-immigrant sweeps have been carried out by Border Patrol throughout Southern California (see "*La Migra*, LAPD Terrorize Latinos, Blacks," *WV* No. 829, 9 July). The threat of a boss's phone call to *la migra* and the failure of the current pro-capitalist union leadership to organize and defend immigrant workers have enabled the capitalists to intensify the exploitation of this vulnerable work force and drive wages down for all. The fact that these workers are organized into a union irks the hotel bosses in a town where the majority of the hotel workforce is unorganized. Even at unionized hotels, workers make poverty wages. Housekeepers, who represent a large portion of Local 11's membership, suffer under punishing workloads—many of them single mothers living on $11 an hour. To give an example of what they go through, the September 7 *Los Angeles Times* reports on the luxury Century Plaza hotel in Century City, referring to the experience of one housekeeper:

> "The Century Plaza quota is 15 rooms a day. That means an average of 30 minutes per room, plus lunch. By mid morning, the worker was already behind schedule. She consulted a scribbled list of room numbers, then braced herself and set her 300 pound cart rolling down the distinctively curved hallway of the hotel, an architectural landmark."

Other union members such as porters, servers and dishwashers face similar workloads, the lowering of which is a key union contract demand.

The Los Angeles contract expired in mid-April, at which point the union leadership agreed to an extension of the contract that lasted until June 1. At that point, the companies, feeling the wind in their sails following the bitter defeat of the UFCW workers in their five-month struggle, cancelled the contract

continued on page 11

Bill Cosby Rants Against Ghetto Poor

The Crisis of Black Leadership

By Don Cane

America's racist rulers like to dress up their rule in terms of general abstract slogans, pretending that they represent the "general will" of the nation. In fact they are a fabulously wealthy minority that lord over a hideously oppressive and unequal society with an unprecedented machinery of deception and repression. Central to this machinery is America's color bar—the stigmatization of skin color, itself a product of black chattel slavery—obscuring pivotal class relations within American capitalist society.

This social reality is so evident it renders unbelievable the widely circulated quote from black Democrat Barack Obama, Illinois U.S. Senate candidate, in the keynote Democratic National Convention speech: "There's not a Black America and White America and Latino America and Asian America—there's the United States of America." This is the big lie, that America has largely eliminated racism through civil rights laws leveling the playing field. Pandering to the demagogic truisms provoked by Bill Cosby's recent anti-black diatribes, Obama adds, "Go into any inner-city neighborhood and folks will tell you that government alone can't teach kids to learn. They know that parents have to parent, that children can't achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white." With many ghetto schools deprived of funding for teaching materials, including books, there should be no fear that any black youth will be "acting white."

With the deindustrialization of the economy beginning in the mid 1970s, education has become an increasingly expendable overhead for the U.S. capitalist rulers. They invest only as much as they can realize back in profit when it comes to the education of those they exploit. Indeed, even the term "public education" is an oxymoron when there are two "publics"—those who've got property and those who don't. The built-in inequality of public school funding, based primarily on local property taxes, ensures that per-student spending in the better-off white suburbs will be much—often many times—higher than in the urban ghettos.

Cosby's widely circulated quote, "Your dirty laundry gets out of school at 2:30 every day; it's cursing and calling each other n----r," amounts to blaming the victims for their own oppression. It reflects both the class divisions within the black population and the fact that black oppression transcends class lines. The cruel and bitter truth is that black ghetto youth are not wanted or needed by America's capitalist rulers. By the same token, growing alienation among black youth is the product of hardening race segregation in this country.

The position of the black middle class in this country is a precarious one, even for those like Cosby who have "made it." To be black and "make it"—to try to become part of "respectable" bourgeois society—requires putting as much distance as possible between yourself and the black ghetto poor. What better way to do that than to blame them for their own oppression? Cosby speaks for the thin layer of wealthy blacks who see the ghetto poor as "bringing the race down."

Cosby, like many others, rightly opposes the casual use of the "N" word among blacks. On National Public Radio's 7 July *Talk of the Nation* show he complained of the unhappy sounds of black kids: "Now you can tell me it's the sound of the 'hood if you want to, but then when you put profanity with it, and degrading self-hatred sentences, you've got a problem." But in response to another guest who denounced Black Entertainment Television making "billions" by "contributing to the degradation of our culture," Cosby clearly defended capitalist enterprise in its entirety, responding, "You can do anything you want to in this United States. I can begin to sell—put a product out

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 833 C-701 1 October 2004

Down With the Occupation of Iraq!

AP

Imperialist "democracy": American occupation forces bomb Najaf.

We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The nasty, brutish and long 2004 electoral campaign is pounding into its final weeks as the two capitalist candidates, Bush and Kerry, contend for the bloody mantle of imperialism's Commander in Chief, each claiming to be the best war president, the hardest on "terrorism." Democrat Kerry says it'll take another four years, but he'll "finish the job in Iraq and refocus our energies on the real war on terror" (*New York Times*, 25 September), while Bush arrogantly claims everything is great in Iraq, lecturing the United Nations and parading his toady Ayad Allawi. But the U.S. occupiers and their loathed, dictatorial puppets face growing chaos, as the American empire brings war, disease, hunger and death to the people of Iraq.

We call for the unconditional, immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq! Tens of thousands of Iraqis have been slaughtered, and over 1,000 American soldiers have died, sent to kill and be killed to maintain the power and profits of U.S. imperialism. An article in the *New York Times* (26 September) titled "What If America Just Pulled Out?" captured why no capitalist politician is calling for an immediate withdrawal: "Withdrawal in the absence of stability would amount to a devastating admission of failure and a blow to America's world leadership. The credibilty of the United States, already compromised, would be devastated. More than 1,000 young [American!] lives would appear to have been blotted out for naught." Well, yes.

Against the bloody occupation of Iraq, the American working class should take a side: *with* those fighting against the neocolonial occupiers and *against* the U.S. workers' own rulers, who enforce exploitation and racist oppression abroad and at home. Every blow struck against the U.S. occupiers, their allies and Iraqi puppets is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world.

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at San Francisco antiwar demonstration, March 2004.

Democrats: A History of Knifing Labor and Blacks

Insofar as the insurgent forces on the ground in Iraq aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers (including the over 20,000 private mercenaries operating in the country), we call for their military defense against U.S. imperialism. However, we vehemently oppose the fundamentalism, terrorism, communalist violence, car bombings that indiscriminately blow up innocent people on the street, the kidnapping of civilians, as the opposite of everything we Marxists stand for. We are for national and democratic rights for everyone, for the liberation of women, for abolishing the capitalist profit system and taking the oil fields and factories out of the hands of the capitalists and putting them under the ownership and control of the working class, so that the wealth of society will serve human needs. It will take working-class struggle, throughout the region and internationally, to achieve these goals.

Our standpoint is that of the international working class, the only class that can liberate all humanity from capitalist exploitation through socialist revolution, most centrally in the United States, the most powerful imperialist power on earth. We judge every question from that perspective, including the elections in the U.S. There's no choice for working people in this year's presidential elections. The two capitalist politicians obviously represent their own capitalist class interests, counterposed to ours. Ralph Nader's eccentric small businessman campaign represents no break with capitalism and is opposed to socialism. Fake-Marxist groups like the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which calls for a vote to Nader, claim that such is a vote for "peace." Hardly. Nader is for an "expeditious" withdrawal from Iraq and for the United Nations, filthy handmaiden of U.S. interests, taking over. He owes much of his ballot status to Patrick Buchanan and the Reform Party, who are obviously pushing him as a spoiler against the Democrats.

The main political obstacle to our perspective in the U.S. is the continued hold of the capitalist Democratic Party over the labor movement through the AFL-CIO union bureaucracy. We say workers and black people must break from the Democratic Party—the other party of war and racism—and build a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government. The following presentation, edited for publication, was given in Chicago on September 11 by Spartacist Central Committee member Ed Clarkson. Comrade Clarkson motivates our Marxist perspective in the context of the last half-century of American imperial politics, faithfully carried out by both the Republicans and Democrats.

* * *

I have a large "9/11" written here because I realized I was giving this forum

continued on page 8

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PDC Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

SWP Office, Black Café Firebombed

Hazleton, PA

A potentially deadly firebombing destroyed much of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) campaign headquarters in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, in the early hours of September 11. A neighbor's alert reaction and call to the fire department undoubtedly saved the lives of families upstairs. In the black community in nearby Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the White House Café was torched at the same time. These attacks on leftists and black people highlight the deadly danger posed by increasingly bold far-right fanatics.

Ominously, some 100 miles from Hazleton, at the Valley Forge National Historical Park, 100 neo-Nazi terrorists from the "National Socialist Movement" massed on September 25. Anti-fascist protesters outnumbered the Nazis by two-to-one, but an even larger mobilization of police protected the fascists. The fascists began their race-hate provocation, organized on the Jewish observance of Yom Kippur, by reviling Jews. The fascist killers should be stopped in their tracks through massive mobilizations of labor, blacks and all their intended victims.

We reprint below a 22 September letter from the Partisan Defense Committee in solidarity with the Socialist Workers Party against the terrible firebombing of their office. The PDC has contributed $100 toward rebuilding the SWP office. Readers who wish to contribute to the SWP's fund to rebuild their office should earmark checks "Rebuilding Fund," made payable to Socialist Workers 2004 Campaign, and mail to: Socialist Workers Campaign, 69 N. Wyoming Street, Hazleton, PA 18201.

Firebombed SWP campaign hall in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

Militant

* * *

The Partisan Defense Committee, the legal and social defense organization in accordance with the views of the Spartacist League, condemns and protests the firebombing of your campaign headquarters in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, on September 11. Enclosed is a contribution towards rebuilding.

The *Militant* noted that a bar in the nearby black community of Wilkes-Barre was also the target of arson on September 11. In the wake of the deadly terror of 9/11 in 2001, the U.S. government unleashed hysterical repression against immigrants, while seeking to equate all political dissent with treason. This poisonous atmosphere has obviously emboldened far-right racist fanatics to step up attacks on black people and working-class groups. It is vital that all socialist and working-class tendencies, and all defenders of democratic rights, be united in defense of one another and against such potentially deadly attacks. As the Wobblies used to say, an injury to one is an injury to all.■

TROTSKY

Social Equality and Black Freedom

In two 1953 lectures, veteran Trotskyist Richard S. Fraser described the limits of equal rights for black people under capitalism and illuminated the class-struggle road to emancipation.

LENIN

The effectiveness of the struggle for the right to vote in the South will remain limited until it is coupled with the struggle for the right of the southern workers to establish their own independent party of labor with no compromise on the basic question of civil rights.

However, equality is not enough, either in the North or South. The Negro has the right to ask: "What is it to be equal to the undernourished white sharecropper in South Carolina? What is it to be equal in the disease-infested slums of Detroit?"...

In the North and West, equality of Negroes as wage workers can never become a reality under capitalism. For capitalism is a system of scarcity, and the Negroes, the last to be hired by modern industry, will continue to be the first victims of the periodic spasms of unemployment which characterize capitalist production.

What would equality bring to the Negro middle class at a time monopoly capital is squeezing out the white middle class? A hundred years ago it would have had meaning. But today equality, even if possible under capitalism, which it is not, would be only the equality of destitution which is the future of the middle class of the United States.

Each of these examples demonstrates that discrimination against Negroes in the United States is so ingrained in the social structure that only complete destruction of capitalism can lay the foundation for the solution of the Negro question.

A hundred years ago Karl Marx, in urging the American workers to support the struggle of the slaves for emancipation and to support the northern cause in the Civil War, proclaimed the following truth: "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded." This is just as true today in the modern context of racial discrimination as it was during the struggle against slavery.

—Richard S. Fraser, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (1953), printed in "In Memoriam—Richard S. Fraser," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, August 1990

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 28 September.

No. 833 **1 October 2004**

Free Aaron Patterson!

CHICAGO—On August 5, former "Death Row Ten" prisoner and community activist Aaron Patterson found himself back in the snare of the racist Chicago cops. Patterson is facing federal felony drug and firearms charges—carrying a mandatory 15-year sentence—stemming from a vindictive sting operation aimed at getting him back behind bars. Those familiar with the Illinois moratorium on the death penalty will likely recognize Patterson's name. A successful fight against his frame-up played a pivotal role in then Republican governor George Ryan's subsequent decision to overturn the death sentences of the entire death row population in Illinois in January 2003.

Aaron Patterson was one of the many victims of Chicago's notorious Area Two police torture chamber, headed by Commander Jon Burge who learned his "interrogation techniques" as an MP during the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, Area Two cops routinely secured confessions by hooking live electric wires to the testicles of black "suspects," or suffocating them with plastic typewriter covers. Patterson spent over 13 years on death row after a phony confession was squeezed out of him at Area Two. On 11 January 2003, based on overwhelming evidence that he was framed up, Patterson was pardoned and released from Illinois death row. Since then, he has been very politically active. In March of this year, Patterson lost a bid in the Democratic Party primary for the Illinois House.

As the Partisan Defense Committee stated in an August 10 protest letter to U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald:

> "Ever since he walked out of prison last year, Patterson has been in the cross hairs of the racist Chicago cops, particularly for his active and vocal role in organizing against racist cop brutality and the colonial occupation of Iraq. This summer, Patterson was prominent in organizing protests against the Chicago cop killing of anti-police-brutality activist May Molina, a 55-year-old grandmother who died in police custody after being denied medical care. Patterson's arrest last week came just one day after a federal judge had ordered Burge to come to Chicago to give testimony in Patterson's $30 million civil suit against the City."

Also swept up in the sting are Isaiah Kitchen and Mark Mannie who are facing felony drug and/or firearms charges.

Patterson was set up by a police informant through a five-month undercover sting. Patterson says that sometime during that period, he figured out that the man was an informant. He says he allowed the informant to carry out his dirty work with the aim of exposing the cops' involvement with drug dealing, calling the whole thing a "stunt gone bad." In an interview with the *Chicago Tribune* (19 August) he said that in a raid on his mother's home, the cops confiscated his recordings and documentation laying out their plan to ensnare him. The details are not clear. But one thing is certain: Daley's cops were out to frame up Patterson, again!

We attended Patterson's court hearing on August 11 where, outrageously, he was deemed a "threat to society" and denied bail. The cops did their best to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation among an overflow crowd of supporters. Those attending his court hearing had to pass through two metal detectors, all bags were searched, and the police demanded photo IDs of all those entering, thus compiling a complete attendance list. The gauntlet of cops, complete with an attack dog, bullied attendees outside the courtroom, including Patterson's lawyer! Inside the courtroom, four cops lined up behind Patterson. The message was loud and clear—Patterson is a marked man, and his defenders are on notice, too!

It is in the interests of the working class, black people and all the oppressed to protest these charges, which are a transparent effort to sweep this black activist off the streets. The racist "war on drugs" is in reality a war on black people, Hispanics and labor. In the name of its "war on drugs" and "war on terror," the government has intensified its draconian gun control laws for the purpose of disarming the population and maintaining a monopoly of violence in the hands of racist torturers like Burge. We are opposed to gun control and all laws criminalizing drugs.

Drop the charges against Aaron Patterson, Isaiah Kitchen and Mark Mannie! Free them now!■

Venezuela: Workers Deserve Better Than Chávez

8 September 2004

Your position on Venezuela ("U.S. Imperialism's Referendum Ploy Fails," WV 831 [3 September]) is an exercise in dogmatism. Its logical content is merely that the Chavez regime is not a workers government, therefore it's capitalist. You imply that Chavez represents the "national bourgeoisie" against US imperialism, whereas he seems to have zero support from local capitalists. You call him a "bonapartist strongman," which buys into the imperialist line that he is "undemocratic" despite operating via frequent elections and referenda. You make much of Venezuela supplying oil to the USA, as if entering a trade war would be anything other than economic suicide.

The situation in Venezuela has come about because of the triumphalist dismantling of authoritarian structures in Latin America after the Cold War. "Liberal democracy," however, is not a suitable system when so much of the population is dirt poor. The result has been the election of Chavez. The capitalist ruling class controls the political system by concrete means and several have been used against Chavez: media campaigns, economic sabotage, a coup, and political manoeuvring. These have failed due to Chavez's popular support, military ties, and control of the oil industry. Therefore the capitalists have a practical problem in asserting their control over their political system. But to a dogmatist, concrete and practical issues have no importance. While it is true that Chavez is not a revolutionary, he is a rogue element from the capitalist point of view.

Moreover, even by your own admission, the referendum was an imperialist ploy, and surely you should side against imperialism and not abstain.

Niall C.

Reuters

Thousands of supporters celebrate Chávez's victory in August 15 referendum.

***WV* replies:**

As Niall C. argues, it is indeed the "logical content" of our argument "that the Chávez regime is not a workers government, therefore it's capitalist." Our article quotes Chávez in his own words foreswearing any intention to abolish private property—the foundation of capitalist class rule. Chávez does have a popular base of support among the poor and he is opposed by key players in the Venezuelan capitalist class. But contrary to Niall C.'s assertion that "the capitalists have a political problem in asserting their control over their political system," their class rule is protected and guaranteed by Chávez who opposes expropriations and dutifully services the crippling imperialist foreign debt!

As we noted in our article, Chávez has very lately, in the run-up to the August recall referendum, thrown some money toward social services for the poor. He was able to do so because the government is currently flush with revenues from the high price of oil sold on the world market. This is conjunctural and cannot last.

The desperately impoverished Venezuelan masses who eke out a living on the margins of the economy are cynically manipulated by Chávez as a battering ram against the notoriously pro-imperialist CTV unions, particularly the powerful oil workers. Chávez wants the unions under his thumb and the rival UNT labor federation is premised on support to his regime. The role of populists like Chávez is to protect the capitalist order by deflecting the just rage of the oppressed masses. Any serious working-class challenge to capitalist rule will be met with the full repressive force of the bourgeois state ruled by Chávez.

Indeed, Chávez has already put the repressive legislation in place to do so under the rubric of the "war on terror." Anarchist militants in Venezuela who oppose Chávez and also oppose his right-wing opposition highlight that section 11 of Venezuela's "anti-terrorist" law, enacted under Chávez, threatens anyone with the intention of causing "anarchy" with one to three years in prison. The legislation is conveniently worded so broadly as to provide legal cover for a massive crackdown on the left.

Latin American history is full of tragic examples of bloody defeats of the workers and oppressed whose interests were subordinated to populist strongmen. Bonapartism even in leftist garb with a democratic facade is an attempt to raise the regime above the influence and control of the competing class forces, to turn it into an arbitrator, i.e., a dictator. Trotsky wrote that bonapartist rule "can govern *either* by making itself the instrument of foreign capitalism and holding the proletariat in the chains of a police dictatorship, or by maneuvering with the proletariat and even going so far as to make concessions to it..." ("Nationalized Industry and Workers Management," 1938).

Latin American history shows that the same individual can play both roles, for the same purpose: to safeguard the interests of a weak bourgeoisie. Thus Juan Perón's original success in consolidating support among Argentine workers in the 1940s was the creation of an affiliated union bureaucracy (such as Chávez is now trying to do in opposition to the old union apparatus tied to the old regime) and modest social welfare measures and wage increases. Perón's "largesse" toward labor and the poor was derived from Argentina's accumulation of foreign exchange during World War II. By the 1950s, the funds had run out and Perón was smashing strikes even by the corporatist CGT unions (he had already systematically crushed independent labor organizations).

The most devastating defeat for the Latin American proletariat was the bloodbath of the Chilean proletariat and the left in the Pinochet coup of September 1973. The road to this was paved not by a bonapartist strongman, but rather by a popular-front coalition government of working-class and bourgeois parties, headed by Salvador Allende. This popular front was a different instrument to achieve the same goal: to deflect the workers from a politically independent class-struggle road and subordinate them to a parliamentary coalition. When the workers were no longer pacified with piecemeal reforms, the popular front was replaced by a ruthless military dictatorship.

The Spartacist League had no crystal ball when confronted with the elections for Allende's Unidad Popular government in the fall of 1970, but we had our program of fighting for working-class rule through championing the political class independence of the workers, and a lot of history to guide us. At the time, when thousands around the world were hailing Allende as "*compañero presidente*" and denouncing the Spartacist League as "dogmatic," we warned: "Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready" (*Spartacist* No. 19, November-December 1970).

Niall C. says *WV* should "side against U.S. imperialism and not abstain" in the August referendum. We explicitly stated in our article that "Had there been a rightist military coup against the Chávez regime, as there was in 2002, we would have sought to mobilize the working class in military defense of Chávez while politically opposing his regime." There was no such military threat. As we noted, "As there was no means to express the crucial need for the political independence of the working class from the bourgeois state in this referendum, abstention was the only choice for revolutionaries."■

Ta-Nehisi Coates

21 September 2004

Dear Editor,

While I have a different take on certain things presented, I thought the Cosby article was on the whole excellent at intersecting ongoing discussion in the black community (see "The Crisis of Black Leadership," *WV* No. 832, 17 September). Its historical depth and breadth are far superior to most commentaries of all stripes extant.

However, on that note, I would like to point out that the article refers to *Village Voice* writer Ta-Nehisi Coates as "She." Ta-Nehisi Coates is a very smart writer well worth reading and quoting. He is however, a "he." Perhaps a small correction is in order.

Comradely,
Gershon Brown

***WV* replies:**

Comrade Gershon is correct. We apologize for the mistake.

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Mexican Trotskyists Say: No Reliance on PRD!

Class Battles in Mexico

We publish below an article put out as an August 2004 *Espartaco* supplement by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, addressing the Mexican government's attacks on the Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del Seguro Social (SNTSS—National Union of Social Security Workers), which organizes the workers of the Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS). The IMSS provides medical care and other benefits for all workers except those employed by the state.

ESPARTACO

Reuters photos

Mexican Social Security workers and other unionists demonstrate in Mexico City against government's anti-worker "reforms," August 31. Right: Workers burn effigy of Mexican president Fox.

For over a year, IMSS directors and the government have been trying to do away with important union gains such as retirement plans. The union has responded with mass mobilizations, and the fear of the workers' social power has thus far prevented the authorities from ramming through their anti-worker "reforms." But as the article below explains, Congress and the Senate recently passed legislation overriding key clauses of the collective contract of IMSS workers relating to the retirement fund and union hiring. This was a first step toward eliminating hard-won union gains and eventually pushing forward a plan for privatization.

In response, the SNTSS, the UNT union federation—to which the SNTSS is affiliated and which includes the powerful union of telephone workers—and the SME electricians union called for a mass demonstration on August 31 and a national work stoppage on September 1, drawing hundreds of thousands of workers to protest on the streets and to surround Congress on the day of right-wing president Vicente Fox's government report (state of the union address). The fear of workers' anger was such that thousands of federal police and army troops were mobilized to protect the Congress, and Fox arrived by helicopter.

The workers' will to fight in defense of their gains has been obvious from the beginning, and not only in the case of the state health care workers. Telephone workers, electricians, electric bus drivers, flight attendants, university workers, schoolteachers and many others who understand that these attacks are directed at the working class as a whole have joined the protests. But the union leaders have done their utmost to minimize the power of the protests. Thus, the UNT and SME's work stoppage was merely symbolic, maintaining the regular function of communications and electricity. There are also widespread illusions, peddled by the union leaders themselves, in the bourgeois-nationalist PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution), which has been posing as a "friend" of the workers, trying to keep the workers struggles within limits acceptable to the bourgeoisie and derailing their discontent in the direction of the ballot box.

The fight is not over. The SNTSS is calling for a strike on October 16 over a wage increase while fighting the reforms Congress passed through other legal channels. Our comrades of the GEM and its youth group, Juventud Espartaquista, have actively intervened in the protests, also organizing speakouts calling on students of Mexico City's National University (UNAM) to join the workers in struggle. Our comrades have emphasized that the working class must rely on its own power to successfully reverse these measures—confidence in the PRD or any other bourgeois party can only lead to defeat. The political independence of the working class is a fundamental premise for the forging of a revolutionary workers party capable of overthrowing the entire capitalist system and replacing it with workers rule.

* * *

Once again, the right-wing regime of Fox and his allies, following the dictates of the World Bank, are trying to topple the historic gains of the Mexican working class. This time they want to start their attack with Social Security [public health care system]. The plans drawn up by IMSS management include a drastic reduction in the salary percentage that future IMSS retirees will receive in pensions, driving these well below what a worker needs for a decent living, along with an increase in the age and number of years of service required to receive this pension. In addition, the reform of the IMSS law passed by the Senate on August 5 and enacted by Fox on August 11 forces each worker to pay for his pension out of his own pocket in advance during the years they work, and endows the "Technical Council" (composed of businessmen, representatives of the Congreso del Trabajo [corporatist labor congress] and the federal government) with full powers to create, substitute or contract out jobs. The law also gives the IMSS and Technical Council control over the retirees' pension fund, tossing the union aside and trampling the union gains codified in the current contract. The government is pushing all this in the name of even further reducing the meager budget that the bosses and government allocate to public health care for the impoverished population, a service that Fox and his cohorts consider superfluous. Far from benefiting IMSS patients, as the government argues, these reforms attack the very existence of Social Security.

Throughout the world, capitalist governments have pushed similar cuts at the expense of state workers and the poor in general. In Brazil, the supposedly "leftist" government of Lula carried out a similar cut last December; in Great Britain, the government wants to increase the retirement age to 70 years. Especially since the destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, a colossal defeat for the workers of the world, the imperialists and their lackey governments perceive the threat of working-class revolution as remote and are emboldened to carry out increasingly frenzied attacks against their own working class. In the face of these attacks, workers internationally have the same interests.

But these measures are not yet a *fait accompli*. The IMSS workers, who have demonstrated great willingness to fight against these measures, are organized in the SNTSS, which with close to 360,000 members is one of the largest unions in the country, and is also part of the UNT [National Workers Union]. ***The degree to which this reform can actually be carried out, or not, will ultimately be determined by the strength of the union movement's resistance.*** There is a lot at stake, and at this point demonstrations and street blockages are insufficient, as are legal challenges, which in the final instance depend on the decision of the bourgeois regime's judges and jurists: what is needed is for workers to draw on the immense social power they possess as the producers of all the services and wealth, a power they can use fully by withdrawing their labor, that is, through striking. We communists of the Grupo Espartaquista de México say: ***For decisive strike action on a national scale to defeat the reform of the IMSS law!***

If this attack on workers' living standards is not fought, it will be followed by attempts to privatize the IMSS, the ISSSTE [Institute of Security and Social Services of State Workers] and the electrical and oil industries, as well as to weaken all unions. Even the bosses' own mouthpieces have recognized that "the outcome of this conflict could be the basis for future negotiations with other unions, given that the benefits received by IMSS workers through the RJP [pension system] are also present, to a greater or lesser degree, in the pension schemes of other companies, such as the ISSSTE, Pemex [nationalized oil industry] and the CFE [electrical industry]" (*Línea Económica*, BBVA-Bancomer, 9 August). The right of wage earners to subsist after their retirement is what the bosses of COPARMEX [Mexican bosses' confederation] (who, as Rosendo Flores [electricians union leader] aptly put it recently, are like "pigs" who only "eat and squeal") and their press call "privileges." Therefore it is in the immediate interest of *all* workers unions to energetically join the SNTSS's strike actions in order to beat back these measures. Many workers from the UNT and the SME [Mexican Electricians Union] understand this and have already expressed their willingness to join the struggle. United on the basis of a class-struggle program, the workers movement has the power to shut down the country and bring the government to its knees!

Notwithstanding the mismanagement of Social Security and the exorbitant wages of its managers, which reach more

AP

Vicente Fox with U.S. president Bush during Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, January 12.

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than 200,000 pesos a month [approximately $20,000] (look who's talking about "privileges"!), the health system requires much greater economic resources than are currently expended in order to guarantee the right to free, quality health care for all. This would require an enormous expansion in facilities, medicine, ambulances and in workers' salaries. The same could be said of the education system and housing. This society produces much more than the meager resources actually allocated for social expenditure, but the function of the Mexican capitalist state is to maintain a status quo where the bulk of the wealth produced by workers is destined, through exploitation, to fatten the profits in the pockets of a few millionaires while at the same time to increasingly subordinate the Mexican economy to the imperialists. While working-class families wait hours to be treated in Social Security hospitals, private hospitals have facilities and medicine that could save the lives of thousands of patients but which are inaccessible through high prices. It is necessary for workers to throw the representatives of the bourgeoisie out of power, destroy their state through socialist revolution and construct a new state, a *workers state* where the wealth produced by society goes directly toward human needs through a planned, collectivized economy. This includes the struggle to extend the revolution to the imperialist countries so that their immense resources are put at the disposal of the impoverished of the whole world. The first effects such an economic system would have on health care can be seen clearly in the collectivized economy of Cuba, where, despite an inhumane blockade by imperialism, the economic isolation of the revolution and the nationalist politics and bureaucratic administration of the Castro regime, access to a quality health care system is guaranteed for even the poorest people, and their achievements in the medical field are internationally renowned. Extending this new form of property internationally to more advanced economies would be the first step toward a classless society based on abundance, a socialist society. ***For a system of free, quality health care for all! Expropriate the private hospitals! Those who labor must rule!***

AFP

Reuters

Mexico City, August 29: 200,000 rally in support of PRD mayor López Obrador (inset), accused of corruption by Fox government.

For the Political Independence of the Proletariat!

A national work stoppage against the IMSS reforms would be an action without precedent in the last few decades and would display workers' immense power. However, this class-struggle program requires the political independence of the proletariat from the capitalist class, something totally alien to the perspective of the current leadership of the union movement. Instead, the union leaders seek to advance their own interests through *class collaboration* with the politicians and representatives of the bourgeoisie. A particularly gross example is the leadership of the CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] and the Congreso del Trabajo, historically affiliated to the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party], who have not only endorsed the proposal to dismantle the pension plan, but have even called for breaking the national work stoppage proposed by the SNTSS, the UNT and SME (see Web site of the STRM [telephone workers union], 11 August).

Another case is that of Roberto Vega Galina himself, the general secretary of the SNTSS, who continues to belong to the PRI—whose support to the anti-working-class reform was decisive for its approval. This political collaboration with the exploiters is a *betrayal* of the working class. In fact, workers affiliated to this union vividly remember that the original position of their leader was *in favor* of the bosses' proposal, and that a massive struggle at their union congress last March was required to convince him that if he wanted to keep his post he must take up, even if only in his speech, the defense of union gains. In a truly instructive episode, the general secretary affirmed: "I can't keep these people under control anymore. The (government) truly has no idea of the dimension of the social bomb that is about to explode" (*La Jornada*, 5 August). As faithful intermediaries for the bourgeoisie in the workers movement, Vega Galina and his cohorts will do everything possible to prevent the general work stoppage that they themselves called for September 1, or in the event that they feel forced to carry it out, they will seek to minimize its impact as much as they can. The SME bureaucrats, who, in front of their membership keep priding themselves on their solidarity with the SNTSS workers, have made clear that on September 1 they will carry out a stay-away action, but will ensure electricity is provided during the 24 hours the work stoppage lasts! *A work stoppage means nobody works! For solid strike pickets!*

In the course of the struggle against the bourgeoisie the pro-capitalist union leaders must be replaced by class-struggle leaderships, which necessarily will be consciously revolutionary. Without this change, no union struggle will be capable of challenging the oppressive capitalist framework in which it takes place. Clearly, resorting to the "help" of the bourgeois state's courts to oust these misleaders is class *betrayal*. The intervention of the bosses' state can only further subordinate the leadership of the unions to the decisions of its class enemy: Labor must clean its own house!

As Marx and Engels explained, all class struggle is a *political* struggle. For this reason, making proletarian political independence a reality requires that workers have their own political party, a socialist, revolutionary party. At union demonstrations such as on August 4, hundreds of workers affiliated to the SNTSS, justifiably angry that their leader belongs to one of the parties that supported the reform, chanted at him, "Quit the PRI!" We Spartacists solidarize with this anger, but recognize that many of these same workers see no problem with their leaders collaborating with another bourgeois party: the PRD. At different demonstrations we have attended, such as on July 23, workers have shouted slogans against voting for the PRI and PAN [Fox's National Action Party], but notably exclude the PRD. In fact, other union leaders maintain well-known ties of political solidarity with this party, such as Agustín Rodríguez of the STUNAM [UNAM workers union], who is even a PRD congressman. With the goal of keeping up the appearance of being a "friend of the workers," maintaining the political leadership of the movement and winning some working-class votes along the way, the PRD has distanced itself from the PRI and PAN in opposing the anti-working-class reform in the Senate. ***Don't be fooled!*** Just like the PRI and PAN, the PRD is a party committed to the maintenance of capitalism, and its defense of the rights of workers is nothing more than a hypocritical and transient posture. If the PRD had the luxury of being able to vote against the reform it was because it neither heads the federal government nor has a majority in Congress, so its vote didn't represent much. When this party is in a position to make real decisions, its posture is as furiously anti-union as that of the PAN or PRI, as evidenced by the case of the metro workers union or the SUTGDF [Mexico City public workers union], unions which Mexico City mayor López Obrador [of the PRD] has sought to destroy under the pretext of "putting an end to mafias." In the same vein, the PRD in government doesn't hesitate when it comes to repressing social struggle, as was so vividly demonstrated by the Mexico City government unleashing its riot police against the UNAM university student strikers in 1999 and 2000. *No reliance on the bourgeois PRD!*

The ideological cement that currently keeps workers bound to their exploiters is nationalism, that is, the lie that all Mexicans, independent of their social class, share a common interest against all foreigners. This is false! In the epoch of imperialist decay in which we live, there is no wing of the national bourgeoisie (whether it be the PRI, PAN or PRD) that can in fact take the side of the popular masses and stand against imperialism, not even on democratic questions as elementary as national emancipation or land reform. It is up to the workers alone to lead the struggles for these demands, independently of the national bosses and *against them*, as part of the struggle for workers power and socialism. The imperialist system must be destroyed on a world scale, a task that demands internationalist solidarity of workers from other parts of the world, especially the imperialist countries. This understanding is the essence of the program of "permanent revolution" formulated by the Bolshevik revolutionary Leon Trotsky.

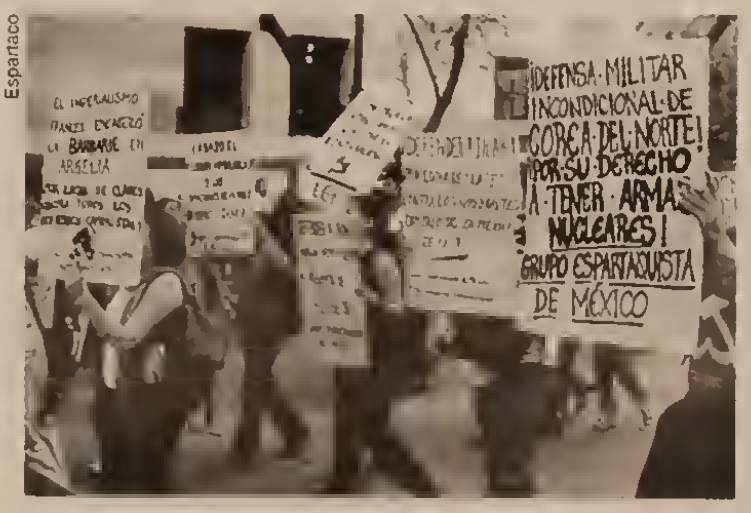
For this reason it is absolutely elementary for every socialist to explain to workers that their interests are completely antagonistic to those of the bourgeoisie and that political organizations have a *class* character, and on this basis call on them to break with the capitalist parties. This is not the case with the tendency called *Militante* (which publishes a newspaper by the same name as well as a pamphlet called *Fuerza Obrera*), which has been very active in the SNTSS protests and which falsely tries to pass itself off as Marxist. It turns out that this tendency belongs to the bourgeois PRD, having belonged to it since *Militante*'s inception in the early 1990s. "Despite the state in which the PRD finds itself," says *Militante* hopefully in its June 2004 issue (which it stupidly dates "2003" in all the interior pages), the party "was an obstacle to Fox's approval of structural reforms and as the contradictions develop the workers will return again to the party and will use it against the attacks on workers...." If this newspaper were really Marxist they would know that the problem with the PRD is not "the state in which it finds itself," but its class character, and that when its "contradictions develop," this class character will place the party on the other side of

continued on page 10

Gloria Trevi Freed!

Reuters

Flashing a victory sign, Gloria Trevi celebrates her release from prison on September 21. After nearly five years of imprisonment in Mexico and Brazil, Trevi was found not guilty of the bogus rape, kidnapping and "corruption of minors" charges she faced as part of a government anti-sex vendetta targeting the pop singer and her entourage. Congratulations, Gloria! (For more on Trevi, see "Free Gloria Trevi! Down With the Anti-Sex Witchhunt!" *WV* No. 780, 3 May 2002.)



Espartaco

GEM comrades march in Mexico City demonstration against U.S. invasion of Iraq, February 2003.

Vote Yes on Measure Q! Decriminalize Prostitution!

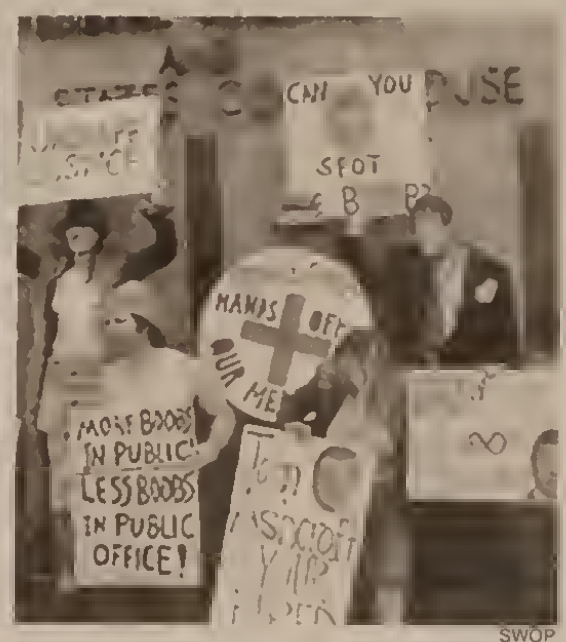
BERKELEY—An initiative on the November 2 ballot calling for the repeal of all laws against prostitution has sparked heated controversy in the Bay Area and the national media. Measure Q states as its purpose: "The unjust laws criminalizing consensual sexual activity among adults in private whether for money or any other consideration must be repealed." This straightforward statement of opposition to state snooping into private life has sparked hysteria from police, city government and homeowners worried about their property values, and, above all, a flock of right-wing feminists who try to disguise their anti-sex witchhunt as concern for the poor and exploited.

Measure Q—also known as "Angel's Initiative," in memory of Angel Lopez, a San Francisco prostitute murdered in 1993—was placed on the ballot through the energetic efforts of the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) and its director, Robyn Few, who recently served six months under house arrest for a prostitution-related conviction (*Daily Californian* online, 29 January). The Spartacist League calls for a "yes" vote on Measure Q as a referendum on the decriminalization of prostitution. At the same time, we note that the measure is utterly toothless, since it is California state law that makes prostitution a crime. In fact, for legalistic reasons, Measure Q's operational conclusion is that "The City Council shall seek to ensure that the Berkeley police department gives lowest priority to the enforcement of prostitution laws."

On September 20, Few joined five other panelists on the Berkeley campus in a spirited debate, "Human Rights and the Politics of Prostitution." Billed as "a forum on the pros and cons of laws on prostitution and how they affect the human rights of prostitutes," the meeting drew some 40 people and two news channels. Also speaking in favor of Measure Q were Laura Agustin, a migrant workers' rights advocate from the Pavis Centre for Cultural Studies, Open University, UK, and Veronica Monet, author and sex worker activist. Opposing them were Norma Hotaling, founder and executive director of SAGE (Standing Against Global Exploitation), which works with the police to "rehabilitate" prostitutes; Melissa Farley, psychologist and director of Prostitution Research and Education; and Davida Coady, director of Options Recovery Services, a drug and alcohol treatment program.

Monet—self-described "former prostitute, current sex educator, lifetime whore"—stressed the importance of the separation of church and state, pointing out that the objections to decriminalized prostitution stem largely from religious groups and the cops. Agustin addressed the conditions of migrant workers, highlighting the problems of women who leave their families and home, for whom prostitution is often the best way to pay off debts to those who got them across the border. She discussed how most women in sex work fall into a gray economic sector—vulnerable to employers and pimps—where the more sex work is criminalized, the more people are arrested. Robyn Few stated that supporters of Measure Q are up against a lot, including angry neighbors. She noted that arresting prostitutes is "big business" and said that San Francisco spends $8 million a year on it. She pointed out that Measure Q opponents are pushing a "fear factor" of criminals, used condoms and needles on every street corner.

Daniel Yaffe



SWOP

Above: Robyn Few, ex-prostitute and director of Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP). Right: Demonstration organized by SWOP against Ashcroft's moral crusade.

To justify their support for criminalizing prostitution, opponents of Measure Q, assuming the posture of self-righteous saviors of the oppressed, retailed stories of abuse and poverty, peppering their remarks with the politically loaded term "sex predator." Arrest and imprisonment were even presented as a step forward for prostitutes! Before the meeting began their supporters demonstrated outside the building, some dressed as Death and sporting cardboard scythes, carrying signs reading "Sex Slavery Is Not a Human Right—It's Child Abuse" and "Pimps Will Profit." Especially grotesque was Hotaling's verbal attack on a young man from the Cal Libertarians (which supports Measure Q), whom she denounced for being "a man" (!) and attempted to humiliate with a vulgar sexual suggestion.

It is worth noting that in 2002 SAGE received $1.25 million from the U.S. Department of Justice, and that Hotaling is co-founder of the First Offender Prostitution Program (FOPP), which works with the San Francisco Police Department. Both FOPP and SAGE have been awarded funds by Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the Ford Foundation—these imperialist think tanks are their partners in "fighting" for the poor! Options Recovery Services receives funding from the Alameda County D.A.'s Office and Probation Department, the Berkeley City Council and Police Department, along with a local Catholic parish.

During the discussion period, a transgender prostitute vehemently objected to statements by Measure Q opponents that prostitutes are "psychologically disturbed people" and their claims of acting "for your own good—we'll force you to be afraid." A young white woman said that becoming a prostitute was the best decision she had ever made—in fact, it had saved her life when she was starving, alone and broke. As she saw it, in a sweatshop job she would make $7 an hour and be sexually harassed—why not make $100 an hour? Dawn Passar, a founder of the Exotic Dancers Alliance, spoke about gains dancers and strippers have made in their working conditions.

Prostitution: A "Crime Without a Victim"

Under U.S. law, prostitution is illegal, with the exception of some counties in Nevada, where it is heavily regulated. This is why Marxists call prostitution a "crime without a victim," like drug use, gambling, pornography, homosexual sex and "statutory rape." Why are such activities particularly targeted in the U.S.? Because bourgeois Christian morality considers them sins. However, from the standpoint of the working class, the act of performing sex for money is not a crime, either on the part of the prostitute or the client. Farley, SAGE and other bourgeois feminist prohibitionists speak glowingly of the "Swedish model," a 1999 law enacted by Sweden's parliament that criminalizes the purchase of sexual services but not the sale. This only switches the focus of police harassment and repression from the prostitute to the client.

Today, a big focus of the anti-sex witchhunt is sex with and between minors (including teenagers), attempting to increase gross police intrusion to "save the children" from "sex predators." The state of California willfully does not distinguish between coerced and consensual sexual acts with youth; witness San Francisco Democrat Leland Yee's AB3042, a bill in the California state assembly, which increases jail time for anyone convicted of having sex with a minor for money.

Prostitution more often than not *is* degrading and exploitative, but criminalization just makes this worse. The prostitute is forced into a lumpen milieu, where access to social services is made complicated or outright denied and where she or he is more vulnerable to organized crime and the whims of the pimp. Criminalization is also a source of police corruption and individual victimization.

Prostitution is a by-product of monogamous marriage and the family, the central source of the oppression of women in class society. As we said in "Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Woman, Anti-Sex: U.S./UN Crusade Against 'Sex Trafficking'" (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 58, Spring 2004):

> "*It is the institution of the family that brings money into sexual relations.* Whether it's renting a prostitute by the hour or a wife by the lifetime, the family and the oppression of women are founded on private property, and the religious codes of morality and capitalist law are all that distinguish the wife from the prostitute in this fundamental sense....
>
> "Under socialism, the family will be replaced by communal childcare and housework, enabling women to participate fully in economic, social and political life.... Birth control and abortions will be free and on demand, with free, quality health care for all. Sex will be free from the snooping of preachy busybodies and corrupt cops. The liberation of the prostitute can't be separated from the liberation of women as a whole, and prostitution will die only as the institution of the family is replaced. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!"

We need to build a class-struggle workers party, independent of both the Democrats and the Republicans, that will fight for all the oppressed and exploited. Such a party will oppose state interference in all private matters. Government out of the bedroom! Vote "yes" on Measure Q! Abolish all laws against prostitution!

"Mobilize Labor to Fight for Women's Rights"

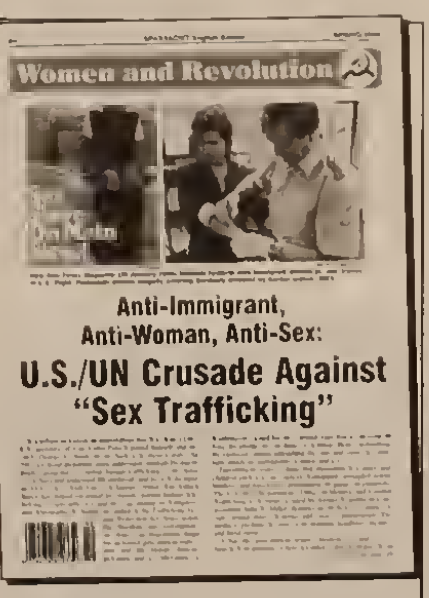
We print below remarks at the Berkeley debate by a Spartacist League supporter:

The government has no business interfering in people's private lives. We oppose all laws against prostitution, against homosexuality, against any act of consensual sex—including on the part of a prostitute or her client—as so-called "crimes without victims." We stand for the separation of church and state. Particularly vicious today are the reactionary "age of consent" laws that ban sex for teens. We advocate the concept of effective consent as the guiding principle in all sexual matters.

For this reason we call for a "yes" vote on Measure Q as a statement of opposition to the laws against prostitution. But it must be said, it is dangerous to build illusions that the police will "play fair" with prostitutes. The police, like the courts and the prisons, are the agents of the government that defends this anti-woman, anti-sex capitalist society. The police are the government's thugs to maintain capitalist morality and "law and order."

The persecution of prostitutes is part of the oppression of women under family and religion in capitalist society. Another is the attack on abortion rights—the anti-abortion bigots see all women as "baby machines." As opposed to building illusions that the capitalist system can be reformed, we fight to mobilize the power of labor to fight for women's rights.

Real progress for the oppressed only comes through hard class struggle, and women are a strategic part of the unionized working class in this country. Education, decent-paying jobs, health care, childcare—all the things that *every* woman needs—will only be ours through a fight for our class power. ■



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Young Spartacus

Black Student Alliance Suspended for Protesting Racist Frat

Georgia State University

While on a *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive trip to Atlanta, the Spartacus Youth Club visited the multiracial Georgia State University (GSU) campus, which was still simmering from last spring's months-long clash between black students and the cretins in the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity (Pikes). In return for jointly apologizing for the "trouble," as well as meeting other conditions, the previously suspended Black Student Alliance (BSA) and the Pikes had been reinstated shortly before we arrived two weeks ago. "Guilty" only of protesting against the racist creeps in the nearly all-white, conservative fraternity, the black students have nothing to apologize for!

It all started in late January when the Pikes hosted a racist "Straight Out of Compton" theme party, for which partygoers were encouraged to don their most "ghetto fabulous attire." Playing on every hip-hop stereotype, the frat rats showed up in "urban" clothing and fake tattoos to mock black youth (who make up one-third of GSU's student body). Two Pikes decided to add to the "fun" by wearing blackface to complete their costumes.

This party polarized the campus, sparking a series of speakouts and rallies over the next three months organized by the BSA and campus NAACP, among others outraged by the racist practices of the white fraternity "brotherhood." Hundreds of students, including some from Morehouse and Spelman colleges, came out to the protests to demand "Punt the Pikes!"

In response, the Pikes presented themselves as the innocent victims of a discriminatory campaign to brand their fraternity "racist," seeking a stamp of approval for their real bigotry. The College Republicans even held an "anti-bigotry bake sale" in late March to smear the BSA as "bigots" for protesting the Pikes! Once again in this racist country, black people who protest against racist smears are portrayed as the source of the problem.

In fact, this frat, founded by a circle of Confederate soldiers and supporters soon after the Civil War, has a long history of racism. For instance, a photo from a 1968 yearbook shows a Pike member dressed in blackface; in the early '90s the Pikes would perform skits wearing blackface and afterward would post pictures in display cases on campus. When one another in a Klansman's robe and the third in blackface with a noose around his neck, from an infamous Halloween party at Auburn University in 2001. Use of the photo was a device to connect the blackface incident at GSU with the many others that have occurred on college campuses in recent years.

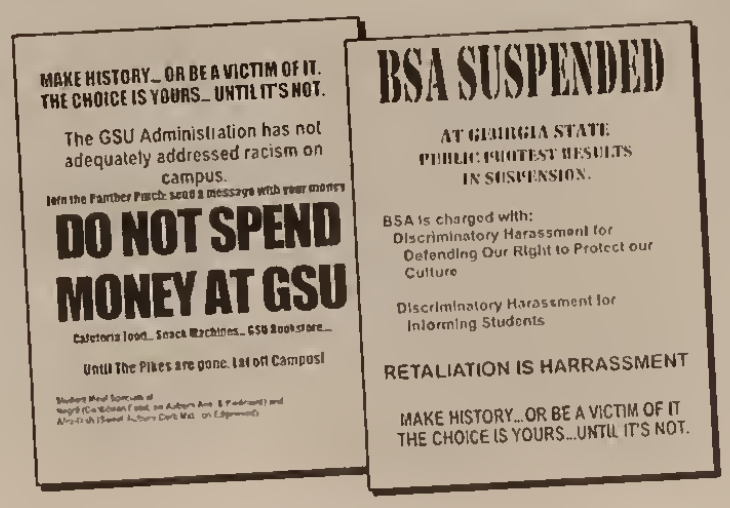
For their part, right-wingers on campuses nationwide have claimed the mantle of "free speech" to carry out racist provocations. So while the Pikes were raising a hue and cry over alleged "harassment" from the BSA, their lawyers were sending letters to the GSU administration invoking First Amendment protection from persecution for their blackface antics! With the assistance of outfits like the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, many frat rats expelled recently for wearing blackface have been reinstated by court order, including those at the 2001 Auburn Halloween party.

We shed no tears for the expulsions of these pigs, but neither do we rely on the administration to fight racism, as did the BSA in its repeated appeals for the university to take action. This strategy doesn't work. At every turn, the GSU administration—which runs the campus in the interests of the capitalist ruling class—showed it is far from neutral. For example, it declared that the actions of the frat did not pose an "immediate threat." Instead, the administration soon identified its own "threat"—the black students. At an early March "community dialogue," it posted police throughout the room to protect the vastly outnumbered Pikes in attendance. In step with the culture of suppressing dissent in post-9/11 America, the administration has used the anti-racist protests as a pretext to try to ban all "unauthorized" political expression, according to another 8SA member.

It is militant, mass, integrated social struggle that would make the racists think twice about spewing their filth. When protesting racist provocations on campus—from cop terror at the University of Chicago and an anti-affirmative action "bake sale" at Columbia University last February to appearances by pro-imperialist ideologue and slavery apologist David Horowitz—the SYCs have called for students to link their struggles to the social power of the multiracial working class, such as unionized transit, heath care and city workers in Atlanta. As we wrote in *WV* No. 563 (13 November 1992) at the time of the 1992 sit-in:

> "In January 1989, many GSU students participated in an exemplary display of labor/black power when they responded to the Partisan Defense Committee's call to stop the KKK from parading in downtown Atlanta. A citywide action, linking students, blacks, gays and immigrants to the social power of labor, would have an electrifying impact in combatting the racist climate at GSU and beyond. *Students: Ally with labor to smash racist attacks!*"

Ultimately, it will take a revolution by working people and all the oppressed to shatter the racist capitalist order and win black liberation in a workers America.■



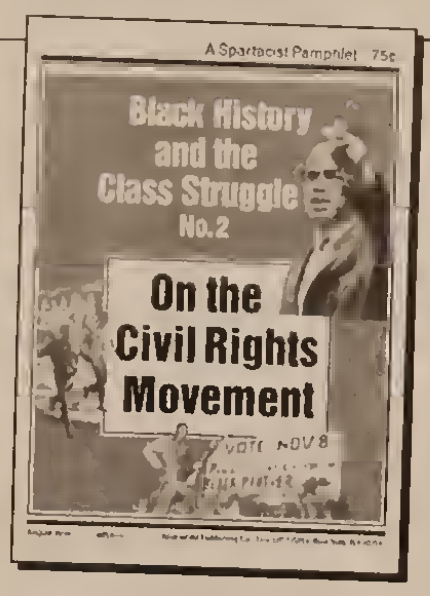
Black Student Alliance flyer protesting Jim Crow on frat row (far left). Appealing to administration, through consumer boycotts or otherwise, is a dead-end strategy; university "addressed racism on campus" by suspending BSA.

such "performance" was followed shortly afterward by the discovery of a racial slur written by a member of another frat on a trash can in 1992, the campus boiled over. In a united action by blacks, gays and anti-racist whites, some 200 students staged a two-day sit-in, shutting down administrative offices, the cafeteria and classrooms. The Atlanta SYC actively intervened into the protests, pushing for a citywide demonstration against racist terror, as the city was still seething from savage cop violence against black Atlanta University students protesting the Rodney King verdict. The sit-in forced the administration to meet several of the protesters' demands, including padlocking shut the Pikes frat house.

In effect siding with the frat rats, the GSU administration attempted to squelch protest against racism on campus and, in April, suspended the BSA the week after it had suspended the Pikes. One BSA member said to a *WV* salesman that the suspension of the BSA is redolent of the Jim Crow era when "uppity Negroes" lost their jobs, were run out of town and not infrequently lynched by white racist mobs. The term "Jim Crow" is taken from the stage name of the popularizer of blackface, a cultural expression of white supremacist ideology dating from the 1820s.

The BSA was convicted of intending "to incite others by making a misleading flyer" and "discriminatory harassment" of a frat member after the Pikes filed formal charges against them. The Spartacus Youth Club has long warned against faith in speech codes of conduct, which are usually applied, as in this case, to discipline minorities and leftists. Tellingly, in addition to suspending the BSA, the administration ruled that its leaders had to participate in a "diversity education" program, presumably to learn to love racists!

However couched in the language of "diversity" and "tolerance," speech codes give enhanced power to university administrators and the cops to act against, for instance, anti-racist youth and leftists who want to expose the bigots on campus or protest the imperialist occupation of Iraq. At GSU, the "misleading" BSA flyer was intended to warn students about the racist Pikes. It featured a photo of three white frat members, one dressed in hunting garb,



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Workers Party...

(continued from page 1)

on September 11, and the destruction of the World Trade Center has some significance in the current election campaign. The attack on the World Trade Center was a criminal act, perpetrated against people who had done nothing wrong except to go to work. As we pointed out at the time, the people who carried out that act think approximately in the same way that imperialists do, that is, that ordinary people are guilty for the crimes of their rulers. Unlike the World Trade Center, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and being a military installation, the possibility of getting hit comes with the territory. But as we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 830, 6 August): "That recognition does not make the attack an 'anti-imperialist' act, nor does it change the fact that terrorism almost always gets innocent people—in this case, the passengers on the plane as well as the maintenance workers, janitors and secretaries at the Pentagon."

The September 11 attacks were seized upon as the reason for the subsequent wars on Afghanistan and Iraq. The imperialist powers, when they attack smaller countries, almost always need to manufacture something as a reason. Of course, if you think about it, the idea that Afghanistan's a danger to the United States is, on the face of it, ridiculous. In this case, the act of terrorism provided U.S. rulers with what they construed to be a reason. But it's not the real reason. And then of course, Bush had to invent the "weapons of mass destruction," just like during Vietnam Lyndon Johnson invented the Gulf of Tonkin incident, and just like in the beginning of U.S. imperialism's entry on the world stage—the 1898 war against Spain—it invented the "Remember the Maine" incident. Such inventions are really rather common.

We're in a subscription drive, and so we've been asking people on campuses what they think about the elections. For the most part they're not too impressed with Kerry. On the other hand, they're scared to death of Bush. So pretty much what we hear is that although they're not sure Kerry's any good, they'll probably vote for him and against Bush, and that's understandable on both sides. Kerry really hasn't said much that's any different than what Bush has to say. On the other side, Bush does seem a little bit mad—as we've described him,' oddly demented. In addition to two wars, we've had the not-so-surprising torture at Abu Ghraib. Not surprising because Bush is after all the guy who put out "Wanted Dead or Alive" contracts for Osama bin Laden and Hussein, and describes as "evil" people who were fighting the U.S. It's hardly surprising that the U.S. did evil things to those people.

Then there are his loyal supporters, the vacant-eyed, largely racist Christian fundamentalists, who give people pause. One Oregon woman supporter of Bush, from that particular portion of the population, described the reason for her vote, that god is in the White House. Now as a Marxist, materialist and an atheist, I was actually kind of pleased to have a believer finally admit that god was a vastly ignorant, bullying and lying Texan. These types are rather scary. It's not just that they believe. But they think belief is superior to facts and reality. Thus Cheney, who knows this audience well, drones on and on about how Saddam and Osama used to play croquet every day on the palace lawn, and nuclear weapons were stacked like firewood on the streets of Baghdad. Now those things are lies, but 50 percent of the U.S. population thinks that they're true.

There are some differences between the Democrats and the Republicans. If you looked at the conventions on TV, the Democratic Convention looked a little like this room—a little of this, a little of that, a little black, a little Hispanic, a lot of women. At the one four years ago, 28 percent of the delegates were trade unionists. It was probably as high this time. The Republican Convention was sort of "Unpleasantville": people that are kind of strange, that you may not want to know. On the one hand, the Democrats play to a base that's largely composed of liberals, working-class people, blacks, and so they tend to express concerns for things like health, jobs, education, sometimes even peace. Republicans, on the other hand, like to emphasize small government, low taxes, fiscal responsibility, no restrictions on enterprises, and tend to push the idea that if the rich are really rolling in it, everyone profits. "High tide raises all boats," as they say. And this plays well to the very wealthy. It also goes for small businessmen, who think if their employees are real frugal and watch their diet, they can get by on three or four dollars an hour just fine.

The Republican Party, in the process of history, has gone from the party that led the progressive Civil War in the middle of the 19th century to becoming the main party of racist reaction. The Democrats held that job for a century or so until the '60s and '70s. Usually the top members of the KKK were also Democratic Party members and often elected to office as such. The Republicans tend to push America the strong, the pure, the just: jingoism. The Democrats do that normally through the vehicle of "America First" protectionism for workers, which is sold very much by the labor bureaucracy. It's the same message, but it's wrapped rather differently. So young people tend to hope perhaps that the Democrats will be less cruel than the Republicans. In this they are assisted by the anarchists and socialist groups, like the International Socialist Organization, that pander to the "anybody but Bush" campaign. You don't have to be a genius to figure out who the anybody is that they're asking you to vote for.

The short form of this presentation is that it's the American imperialist rulers and their capitalist system, and not particular governments, whether Republican or Democrat, which are responsible for war, exploitation, the race-caste oppression of blacks in this country, for the shredding of our rights, for our lack of access to health care and education and, indeed, in some ways, for our lack of access to a future. So it's really the system that's got to go, and that requires a socialist revolution in this country, which means we must link the cause of black freedom to the fight against all exploitation and injustice. Note that the situation of black people probably hasn't been mentioned in the context of a presidential election in perhaps three decades now. It's just not considered polite. A vote for any one of the bourgeois candidates is a vote of confidence, in fact, in their imperialist system, a vote that says that this system can be fair and humane, and a vote against the crying need for a socialist revolution and for building the revolutionary working-class party that is necessary to have such a revolution.

AP

Asahi Shimbun

Democratic president Truman with General MacArthur (far left) in 1948: architects of nuclear holocaust at Hiroshima (right) and Nagasaki.

From Truman to Kennedy: From Hiroshima to Vietnam

Let me go through my experiences as I was growing up with this process. The first election I remember was Harry Truman's in 1948. I was nine years old, already a Democrat—it came with the neighborhood. If you had asked me, I would have said, sure, vote for Truman, even though I knew he just nuked Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and I didn't think that was especially charming. It seemed more like an act of terror than an act of war. But I was pleased when he was elected: it was actually a big upset. Those of you who know a little bit about history know the august *Chicago Daily Tribune* printed a headline, "Dewey Defeats Truman." Well, he didn't win, Harry did.

But then the aftermath gave me some pause. Because it was the Democrats, under Truman's leadership, who launched the Cold War, what has come to be known as McCarthyism. It's actually an inadequate description, because McCarthy was a latecomer. The Democrats drove the reds out of the trade unions by 1950, using their "America First" supporters in the unions, and that's when McCarthy appears on the scene. The Cold War, what it meant for me as a kid, was that every day I got on my knees and faced the wall of my classroom, put my head down. That's an atomic bomb drill—it was supposed to keep you safe. And as we said at the time, "and kiss your ass goodbye." Because we all were kind of aware that this was not going to defend us from atomic attack.

The red purge of the trade unions was something I didn't exactly understand, nor did I understand why it was "bad" to be a socialist. Socialism certainly seemed to me not an insane thought, and one perhaps Americans should be permitted to hold. I can't say I was a socialist myself. The Cold War seemed to me to make no sense, because after all hadn't we just been the allies of the Soviet Union, who seemed to have done a very nice job mopping up the Nazis, without much help, incidentally, from the United States. And then they put the Rosenbergs on trial under Truman. They weren't executed until 1953 when Eisenhower came into office.

Most scary for me was the Korean War, because then I was a little older, I was then 11 or 12, and I was getting close to draft age. In the Korean War, in about the same time frame that this Iraq war has gone on, 30,000 American soldiers died. It was hot, plenty hot. And no one in the country much liked it. At the time I wondered what business the United States had interfering in those affairs, which shows you I wasn't a Marxist. Now I know why the United States interferes in those affairs. Most of the country really didn't like it, except it was the McCarthy period, so you couldn't say anything, or else you'd be driven out of your job and harassed by Congressional investigating committees.

Instead, people elected Republican Dwight Eisenhower, who had a tremendous preference for golf, and who did immediately end the Korean War by simply drawing a line in the sand and not signing a peace treaty, and walking away from it. There is no peace treaty with North Korea to this day. The Republicans are supposed to be good for business. But in Eisenhower's eight years in office, there were two major recessions. I said, jeez, this doesn't make much sense. I was looking for a job in the second recession and didn't find much. Eisenhower's response to the civil rights struggles in the South was essentially to let the racist mobs be. On those occasions when the government intervened, it was usually when black people were doing something to defend themselves. So that didn't seem very promising.

Then the 1959 Cuban Revolution happened at the end of his term, and I remember being kind of pleased with that. Actually Castro came to the United States, appeared on the Jack Paar show at the time, stayed in Harlem, which was smart. And of course Eisenhower hated it, but he couldn't do anything about it because of the Korean War—too many bodies already. I mean, the reason people in the United States didn't like Korea is they just fought a major war and they didn't want another one. But Eisenhower did stonewall, and probably actually

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influenced the Cuban regime in the final steps it took, in the sense that Castro decided there was to be nothing forthcoming from the American imperialists, so he nationalized everything on the island of Cuba.

I've never voted for a bourgeois candidate of any sort. I came close once with a presidential candidate. Before I turned 21, which was both the voting and the drinking age at that time, I became in my mind a communist with the help of some friends who convinced me of the essentials of the Marxist analysis of capitalism—that is, the fundamental motor of the system is the drive for profits. The fundamental classes in capitalism are, on the one hand, the class that owns everything, the bourgeoisie, and on the other hand, the class that makes everything, the proletariat. Imperialism was in fact the exportation of this system of exploitation to backward and weak countries. Some of us had connections with the working class, and the giant civil rights struggles were going on, beginning in about 1955 or so and escalating throughout the period. So we were very much convinced that unless you fought racism in this country, the necessary working-class revolution would not be able to occur. We did not understand the race-caste oppression of blacks in this country, but we understood that if it wasn't fought there was no way the American working class was going to be able to unite. So Kennedy didn't get my vote. And he doesn't even know it.

But those ideas compelled me then, and they compel me now. In any event, JFK didn't seem very appetizing, although he was dressed up like a Boston liberal, as is Kerry today, and was Catholic and all that. He ran to the right of Nixon. He ran on a program of rearming American imperialism, accused Eisenhower of having given the store away because of the revolution in Cuba. And I had just sort of been there, under Harry Truman, and I didn't particularly think that was very appetizing. Sure enough, Kennedy gets in office, we have the Cuban Missile Crisis, when every thinking person in the United States thought it could well be over. You had the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba before that, which was only dropped because nobody showed up for the CIA-led invasion, and Kennedy kicked up the level of the U.S. in Vietnam a little bit.

Part of the Way with LBJ?

So Kennedy disappears, for reasons we all know, and LBJ takes his place. Now we come to the point of my weakness, the election that pitted Lyndon Baines Johnson against Barry Goldwater. LBJ was kind of a typical New Deal Democrat—but Southern, and at that time, that meant he hadn't exactly played a great role on the race question. He was better than some, but pretty much in that bloc. The essence of the campaign was about what was going to be done in Vietnam. Barry Goldwater had this very interesting idea. At that time the United States was not bombing North Vietnam. He thought it would be good to bomb them back into the Stone Age, and was even prone to consider using nuclear weapons to do it. This guy was quite crazy, I thought, maybe in this case I should go for LBJ. And if this reminds you somewhat of the current Bush regime, this is why I bring it up. But fortunately, I had a friend in Progressive Labor Party who convinced me that "a boss is a boss is a boss." I didn't make it to the polls, though I was highly tempted.

So we know what Johnson did. There was some civil rights legislation passed in response to the mass battles for civil rights that occurred, mainly in the South, but also in the North of this country. There was a "war against poverty" that evolved out of the ghetto upheavals, in an effort to buy people off. But, it turns out, Johnson then went on and bombed the north of Vietnam. The U.S. in fact dropped more bombs on Vietnam than had been dropped in the entire European theater during the Second World War. Three million Vietnamese were dead as a result. So it goes to show you.

AP

UPI

Democrats' dirty, losing war in Vietnam: Kennedy's escalation of the war in Vietnam set the stage for massive carpet bombing of the country by Johnson (pictured above in Vietnam in 1966).

Johnson, unlike the myth about Democrats raising taxes, raised no taxes, which is almost impossible in a war because you have to spend. As a result, at the end of his term, the U.S. was on the ropes economically. And the reason he didn't raise taxes is that he wanted to buy off the black population with some measures—and in some sense there were some genuine progressive measures there, especially the end of *de jure* segregation—and he also wanted to buy off the working class by not making them pay for the war. Johnson figured, rightly, that raising taxes would have further inflamed antiwar sentiment. Well, since the working class didn't begin to strike until the end of this period, in that sense he was successful. In turn, what the civil rights legislation and the "war on poverty" did was give an excuse for the black Democrats, some of whom are still around today, like Jesse Jackson Sr., to return to the fold of the Democratic Party. The Panthers and others who thought social justice hadn't been achieved yet, quite correctly, but didn't quite know how to get there—they were left out there on the streets by the black Democrats who for the most part allowed them to be mowed down by the FBI without much of a protest. Over thirty members of the Black Panther Party were killed in the aftermath of that.

The next candidate of interest was Jimmy Carter, who was sort of the opposite of what you would construe as a Democrat. In fact he looked a little like George Bush does. He said people shouldn't expect justice in this society, "life is unfair," we're going to have to give up some things, we're getting a little too fat. He talked about family values and the importance of religion—all that kind of stuff. Mostly he was interested in rebuilding the strength of the United States, which had lost its ability to intervene in the world. This was the result of the fact that the Vietnamese, with justice, drove the U.S. out of Vietnam. That war wasn't very popular amongst the population. And Jimmy Carter thought this was unfortunate, and he should change this.

The people who voted for Jimmy Carter weren't very impressed with what he had to say once he got into office, so they immediately elected Ronald Reagan. The air traffic controllers union, PATCO, went on strike, and he smashed the union. It doesn't exist today. What most people don't know is he did it with a plan devised by Jimmy Carter when he was in office, because the strike had been pending for some time. He also had a tax cut. One of the things about the PATCO strike that tells you something about the current leaders of the American trade union movement was that they let that union sink. Normally you'd think of the trade union tops as bound to the Democratic Party. But remember Reagan was in office. Some of them go Republican occasionally. But their real allegiance is to the system of capitalism. That's what's behind their allegiance to the Democrats. All they had to do was close down the airports. Period. That strike would never have failed. One week, and it would have been over. The heads of some of the unions that refused to do that called themselves socialist—like Winpisinger in the machinists.

Ronald Reagan did a very uncharacteristic Republican thing—he was a fiscal conservative, small government, and all that. But he spent more money and expanded the government more than any Democrat since Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He did this because he had intensified what we describe as "Cold War Two," which started under Carter. There was immense, vast, military spending, again without taxation, which again put the U.S. in hock, so that George Bush Senior, his successor, had to suffer the consequences, and he was voted out of office.

Bush Sr. was replaced by Bill Clinton, who I think in some ways is the most amazing president of the 20th century. Anybody who watched the convention saw that they would have re-elected him, fellatio or not. If they could have done it, they would have brought him on again. I mean, they were ecstatic when he was on that stand. And there's no question he's quite personable and seems to have a certain charm; he plays the saxophone, eats bad food and gets down and talks to people. If you look at what happened during his regime—and you know, Clinton is still a big favorite among many black people—more black men went to jail during the Clinton years than has ever happened. Look what happened in Iraq during the Clinton years. More Iraqis were killed by Bill Clinton, by far, than have been killed by either of the Bushes to date. Over a million by his UN sanctions policies. All the "anti-terror" legislation, people now being deprived of their rights, immigrants being picked up on the street, etc.—all passed by Clinton.

So this guy is really a consummate political swindler. Which shows you the task we have, the obstacles to forging a revolutionary party, because there are a lot of illusions in this country. And insofar as they tend to exist among working people, they tend to exist in the favor of the Democrats. It also simultaneously shows you the disservice the rest of the left does by giving a backhanded vote to these guys, because what that does is of course add to those illusions, that there is a possibility for fundamental reform there.

Now the interesting thing is, my father could have told me exactly the same story about a vastly different America than I was raised in, just as the America I was raised in is vastly different than the one that exists now. He could have told me about two presidents, both Democrats, who ran on peace platforms and then immediately went to war. He could have told me about the first war against terror in this century, which was called the Palmer Raids, which was launched under the Democratic president Woodrow Wilson, in which thousands of socialists were imprisoned and immigrants—and that's what the American working class was at that time, immigrant—were deported. Some of them went back and joined the Bolsheviks, which is quite good. He could have told you about the roaring '20s, when the working class had the boot in its back, and how the initial Roosevelt measures against the Great Depression were actually pro-boss. And that nothing really happened in this country until the giant class struggles that built the CIO, that is, from 1934 and after.

U.S. Government: Executive Committee of the Capitalist Class

Why do I bring this all up? Imagine you're a Martian now; you're taking your course on U.S. history. You've been told what the Democratic Party says it is, and you've been told what the Republican Party says it is. And then I give you some of these incidences that I've just gone through: the Korean War, the Cold War, the destroying of PATCO. You could not guess, from the incident, which party was in power. Nor could you guess what the politics of the particular president were. Because all that, in the final analysis, is hype. It's window dressing. It's not what's involved.

What the government is, whether it's Republican or Democrat, is what Marx and Engels called "the executive committee of the ruling class." Its job is to realize the dominant program and aspirations of the American ruling class and of American imperialism. If it fails to do so, it will be replaced in one way or another. Sometimes, in some countries, this has been through military coup. Now what are these dominant aspirations of the American ruling class? Fundamentally, they're to increase profits and to increase the ability to make profits. And what that requires, of course, is a constant effort to reverse and combat the working class in its struggles against the capitalist system, and also the rest of the oppressed. And of course occasionally, when subjected to mass struggle, the ruling class gives out a few goodies. But then of course, subsequently continues to take them away. And as I said, imperialism is really just the exportation of this, in a meaner way, to countries in which people really starve to death.

Now one very important countermanifestation to this, since the Bolshevik Revolution, is something we call the "Russian Question." In the Russian Revolution the working class took power and kicked out the capitalist exploiters. Isolated, increasingly impoverished and surrounded by hostile imperialist powers, the young Soviet workers state went through a conservatization. Stalin took the political power away from the working class by 1923-24, and went on to eventually consolidate a dictatorship based on a bureaucratic caste. The primary appetite and the task of the American imperialists since Day One, as the most powerful imperialist country on the planet, was to destroy the Russian Revolution, the most historic and fundamental gain of the working class. Secondarily, they've also operated to attenuate the unions. The bourgeoisie has operated, with its willing labor lieutenants in the labor movement, to pretty much hamstring and domesticate the organized labor movement, and also simultaneously to reduce it considerably in size, so now it's about 10 percent of the workforce.

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Workers Party...

(continued from page 9)

Trotsky pointed out that if you don't fight for past gains, you can't fight for future ones. Thus our position defending the Soviet Union, where the last remaining gains of the Bolshevik Revolution were overturned in 1991-92, with Yeltsin at its helm. Our position towards the remaining societies where capitalism was overthrown—North Korea, Cuba, China, Vietnam—is that we defend them against the bosses, against any attempt to restore capitalism. In the same regard we defend the trade unions from attacks by the bosses. We recognize that the political leadership in these societies does not operate in the interest of proletarian revolution, and so we are for a political revolution to overturn them, just as we are for, in this country, replacing the existing leadership of the trade unions with a class-struggle leadership.

Our socialist opponents are rather different in that regard. They didn't defend the Soviet Union, in fact they rather cheered when it fell apart. The immediate effects of counterrevolution on the population in those areas have been devastating. But also that counterrevolution is responsible for what the U.S. is able to do to the world right now—war after war after war. It wouldn't have happened if the Soviet Union was still around. Not in that way, at least—because the USSR was a military counterweight against the U.S. But the fake-Marxists all cheerled. Now they tend to hide that. And they did not defend Iraq or Afghanistan against imperialist attack. They didn't call for what is sort of elementary, that is the defense of the victims. The absence of such defense on the part of the working class signifies that the working class is still tied to the program of its imperialist masters. And unless that tie is broken, the working class cannot proceed to try to realize its historic aspirations, which are to liberate humanity from all forms of constraints except those imposed by biology and the pursuit of sex. Or, as some would say, love.

Fight for Socialism!

Now, Kerry. He's for increasing the U.S. military, for increasing the war against terror, which I assume will eventually lead to cavity searches at the El stops. As we've noted, in the recent period, under Bush and under Bill Clinton before him, and evidently under Kerry and the Democrats, who are really worried that Bush hasn't made us "safe" enough, the government has operated in such a manner as to essentially assert that citizens have no rights that the government is bound to respect. Like most Democrats, Kerry is interested in increasing pressure on North Korea, as part and parcel of what the Democrats consider to be the appropriate role for U.S. imperialism, which is to drive off the map any societies that have expropriated capitalism. He's very much for what the Israelis are doing to the Palestinians, which is potentially genocidal in nature. He wrote a little tract called "The Cause of Israel Is the Cause of America." The good thing, he says, is "help is on the way"; there's a light at the end of the tunnel. Well, unfortunately it is a train, I believe.

Reuters

Political swindler Bill Clinton signs bill to "end welfare as we know it" in 1996, consigning multitudes to even greater poverty and deprivation.

There'll be no substantive change in the condition of working people unless there is class struggle in this country. Wages will go up and down. Some more will be hired or not hired. But the general direction is down, unless there's struggle in the factories and struggle in the streets. Eighty percent of the delegates at the Democratic Convention were against the Iraq war. And yet Kerry isn't. Why? The reason is the American imperialists cannot abide the idea of giving up their position in the Near East, which has both geopolitical and oil resources of untold importance. And so they can't, in any meaningful way, pull out. They might end the military hostilities in some way, although it's still a mystery how they're going to do that. But they cannot really give up their influence in that part of the world. This could happen through a couple of mechanisms: either proletarian revolution in the area, or if they lost it to their imperialist competitors. And this the American imperialists are not going to abide. No bourgeois candidate could promise, in fact, to get out of the Near East, and indeed Kerry doesn't.

Nor does Ralph Nader, for that matter. He says he'll leave expeditiously. I have to admit I have trouble seeing what people find in Nader. He's in many ways a typical small businessman. He doesn't like unions in his business, doesn't like Chinese imports, not a word about black people, worries about immigration, too many people coming in, supports capitalism but thinks the big corporations are unfair. I mean, this is not very exciting, and his main purpose for running, as he states it, is to pressure the Democrats. Nevertheless, there are a couple groups, the International Socialist Organization and Socialist Alternative, that are hyping him in the elections, which reveals, I think, their reformist core. That is, what they really stand for is not socialism, but a reform of the capitalist order. Socialist Alternative describes this as "critical support." Now sometimes in fact we, the Spartacist League, have given critical support to working-class parties. Nothing wrong with that. But what is critical support of a capitalist? It can only be construed as critical support of capitalism. Moreover, Socialist Alternative calls on Nader to build a workers party in the country. As my daughter would say, "what have these guys been smoking?" How can somebody who's not fond of trade unions form a workers party in this country?

Elections and voting can be good for some things. But the government is the executive committee of the ruling class, and the core of capitalist class rule is the cops, the army and the courts. In the final analysis, it's the gun. Guns don't respond to votes. The cops and the army, those class institutions, have to be smashed if there's going to be a socialist revolution.

If there was such a party in power, the immediate effects would be: Free health care for everyone, next day. Free education at all levels for everyone, next day. A move to end the forced segregation of blacks in this society, next day. A move to employ everybody in this society, next day. Everybody's wage is livable. That's easy. And then we begin to build for real, for a real socialist future.

Now we're not that party. Our numbers are too modest, our influence in the working class is too small. But we do have elements: we have the program and we have the will. We have the program for socialist revolution, which comes from Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, applied to these circumstances. And we have the necessary will to fight to forge that party, and never to cave in to one liberal or bourgeois fad or another, as do our opponents. Our opponents generally accuse us of not doing much. Actually, if you were to join us, you would do more than you wanted to. There are leaflets to write. There are things to be learned about socialism, about the history and structure of the thought of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. There are demonstrations to be had. There are interventions to make, to expose the people who prop up this system through their illusions.

So there's lots of work. We built demonstrations against the Klan, in the urban centers, a couple around Chicago. We built a demonstration out in Oakland several months after September 11, which called for "Down with the war on immigrants! Down with the Patriot Act!" In proportion to our size and abilities, we carry out such actions as we can, around a program that is for the working class. So, to those of you who burn, I guess that would be the word, at the current injustice, oppression and slaughter that we have been offered by the capitalist system, you can of course continue to vote and hope that things don't get worse. The odds are they will. Or, you can join us and consider fighting for the end of injustice, oppression and exploitation for all time. And that's not a bad deal.■

Mexico...

(continued from page 5)

social struggle, as has happened before. The occasional criticisms that *Militante* makes of the bourgeois politics of the PRD are directed toward pressuring its leadership to adopt policies that, according to *Militante*, would better serve the function of the PRD as a "left" bourgeois party, that is, as an escape valve to contain social discontent within the framework of bourgeois politics. Political support to a bourgeois party necessarily means support to the continuation of capitalism.

Against All Manifestations of Oppression and Backwardness!

As clearly exemplified by the SNTSS with its important component of women workers, the integration of women into production and service demands that working-class women play a leading role in the struggles of their class. Furthermore, the full emancipation of all women requires the destruction of the capitalist system and its replacement with a planned economy. In this sense, the fight against their special oppression constitutes an indispensable motor force for revolutionary struggle in general. The workers movement must combat the prevalent machismo among its own members and present broader demands than those of the current economic struggle. Free abortion on demand! Free, quality, 24-hour dining halls, laundries and childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

A particularly grotesque expression of bourgeois nationalism among workers has been the emergence of fairly widespread anti-Semitic prejudices, generally directed against the bourgeois politician who runs the IMSS, Santiago Levy. This individual is certainly a leech and enemy of all workers, but this has absolutely nothing to do with his ethnic or religious origins. In reality, anti-Semitism is a stupid and reactionary ideology that the bourgeoisie uses to deflect social discontent and confuse more backward workers as to who their real enemy is, that is, the bourgeoisie as a class. That is why anti-Semitism is known as the "socialism of fools." On more than one occasion, our comrades have had to combat anti-Semitic prejudices at SNTSS rallies and marches. What is incredible is that there are organizations that claim to be "leftist" that not only tolerate these prejudices, but sometimes even participate in them. So, for example, the widely distributed "leftist" newspaper *Machetearte* published in its 12-13 April issue a disgusting article on the IMSS which blamed the anti-working-class attacks on a "new world order run by the international Jewry." The false identification of a particular ethnic group with the exploiters and bankers was a central component of the ideology of the Nazis, who assassinated six million Jews in the Holocaust. No decent worker, and much less a genuine leftist, should tolerate this garbage! As Trotsky explained on the eve of World War II:

> "Before exhausting or drowning mankind in blood, capitalism befouls the world atmosphere with the poisonous vapors of national and race hatred. *Anti-Semitism* today is one of the more malignant convulsions of capitalism's death agony. ... An uncompromising disclosure of the roots of race prejudice and all forms and shades of national arrogance and chauvinism, particularly anti-Semitism, should become part of the daily work of all sections of the Fourth International, as the most important part of the struggle against imperialism and war. Our basic slogan remains: Workers of the World Unite!"
>
> —"The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (1938)

The workers cause requires the forging of a party that is not only capable of representing the interests of the workers against all the capitalist parties, but that can also unite all the oppressed who fight against the brutality of the capitalist system behind the workers movement, whether they be women, peasants, students, homosexuals or indigenous people—in other words, a party capable of leading a workers revolution. The struggle to build such a party is the reason why the Grupo Espartaquista de México exists. We invite all thoughtful workers who are considering how to advance the working-class cause to read our press and discuss with us.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Black...

(continued from page 12)

Department of Law Enforcement has sent armed state troopers into elderly black voters' homes on an "investigation" of voter fraud—despite the department having decided in May that the charges were baseless! The president of the Florida Voters League (a group that works to increase black electoral turnout), Eugene Poole, stated:

> "These guys are using these intimidating methods to try and get these folks to stay away from the polls in the future. And you know what? It's working. One woman said, 'My God, they're going to put us in jail for nothing.' I said, 'That's not true'."
>
> —*New York Times*, 20 August

"Not true"? In 1985, longtime Alabama civil rights activist Spiver Gordon was convicted of "voter fraud" for the "crime" of assisting elderly black people to file absentee ballots, which allowed blacks to vote without fear or intimidation in the privacy of their own homes. The prosecution and conviction of Gordon were part of a concerted campaign by the Reagan administration to disenfranchise black voters, particularly in the South.

Today, a national law, ironically named the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), has significantly tightened ID requirements for those newly registering and voters across the country, making it easier to turn voters away. In a test run of these requirements in Chicago, 95 percent of the provisional ballots cast by those whose "identity" was in question were invalidated. In an amusing twist, Senator Kit Bond of Missouri, who pushed through the HAVA, found himself struck from the rolls in his hometown and had to go through a tedious rigmarole to vote for himself. The Spartacist League stands opposed to any and all restrictions on the rights of citizens to vote and for the right of all immigrants (documented or not) to full citizenship rights—including the right of franchise.

Many states are moving toward electronic balloting. The companies that provide these machines have close links to the Republican Party: Election Systems and Software (its predecessor company was headed by current Republican Senator Chuck Hagel), Sequoia Voting Systems (whose products were rejected as insecure against fraud in the 1990s by New York City), Hart InterCivic (one of whose main investors was an early financial backer of Bush's business schemes) and Diebold Election Systems (also linked to the GOP). These systems eliminate any paper trail and, as the *Nation* (16 August) put it, could be used "to invisibly falsify the outcomes" of elections. With a little finagling with the software, these "innovations" could render old methods of stealing an election, like leaving dead people on the rolls and stuffing ballots, superfluous. And there would be no gravestones to check.

Stealing elections is nothing new, and it's hardly limited to the Republicans. In fact, one could say that this old American "art" was perfected by Democratic Party machines in cities like New York (Tammany Hall) and Chicago (the Daley machine—"vote early, vote often").

Beyond dicey electronic voting systems and police intimidation, though, and far more instrumental in the purge of black people from the rolls, is the racist "war on drugs." We have long declared that this "war" is a war against black people. Over *two million* people are in state and federal prisons, largely on drug charges. This attack focuses on black people, whether through cop rampages through the ghettos of the inner cities or through the depredations of regional narcotics task forces, like the one in rural Texas that framed up 46 people in 1999 (see "Tulia Victims Freed, Finally," *WV* No. 813, 7 November 2003). While the white population in prison for drug offenses increased by 306 percent between 1985 and 1995, the number of black people incarcerated for the same period shot up by *707 percent* under mandatory sentencing schemes supported by both Republicans and Democrats—including John Kerry. We are for the decriminalization of drugs.

Library of Congress

Massachusetts 54th, first black regiment, charging Fort Wagner, July 1863. Civil War smashed slavery and won the franchise for black men.

The war on drugs has a direct effect on who votes and who doesn't. Five states permanently ban felons and ex-felons from voting (including Florida), while only two states allow prisoners to vote (Maine and Vermont—both of which have tiny black populations), and the rest have policies that to one degree or another fall between these two poles. The result is clear. Felony convictions bar 4.6 million Americans from voting (some 2.3 percent of the electorate), of whom over a third are black men. Indeed, *13 percent* of black men are currently barred from voting, and many more felons who could vote believe they cannot.

All of this emphasizes the tenuousness of basic democratic rights in capitalist America—especially for black people. The Republicans know that they are not going to get the black vote; they are a party of plutocrats, racist bigots and bible-thumping yahoos and make no bones about it. But what of the Democrats, the party that stands to lose from the purge of black voters? At first blush, one would think that they would vigorously defend black voting rights, if only for the obvious electoral advantage.

But no. Even after their betrayal of the black masses following Reconstruction, the Republicans, guaranteed the black vote given that the Democrats were the party of choice for the KKK, were quite willing to let the Democrats terrorize and disenfranchise the black populace—which generally voted Republican until the era of the New Deal, an alliance between Northern liberals and Southern Dixiecrats that did nothing to enfranchise the majority of black people, most of whom then lived in the Jim Crow South. In the aftermath of the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, and with the Republicans' strategic drive to become identified as the party of right-wing reaction, the Democrats have been guaranteed the lion's share of the black vote.

Democrats have been at most tepid in their defense of the franchise for black people. According to the *New York Times* (26 September), there has been a big increase in the registration of new voters, mainly black and minority, in swing states. But the key thing here is *swing states*. In states where a Democratic victory is all but assured, black disenfranchisement continues apace. For example, more than 40 percent of black men in several neighborhoods in south Providence, Rhode Island are barred from voting because of felony convictions.

One of the most striking scenes in Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* showed Al Gore, as President of the Senate, ruling a series of black Congressmen out of order as they contested the 2000 presidential election results due to the events in Florida—the very events that almost certainly cost him the presidency. Because of the black constituencies that these Congressmen represented (or misrepresented), they felt even more robbed by the election outcome than the man from whom the election was actually stolen. But in ruling out these Congressmen, Al Gore was not acting out of faintheartedness. Rather, it was due to the class nature of the Democratic Party. As a capitalist party, the Democrats are every bit as committed to the maintenance of the racist, capitalist order as the Republicans. They merely argue over the details.

The overriding factor for Gore and the Democratic establishment was that the "sanctity" of the imperial American presidency not be blemished by a dispute over who won. In urging Gore to back down, for example, the *New York Times* (9 November 2000) wrote: "This is a time for both presidential candidates, their advisers and their parties to proceed with extreme caution—a caution merited by the danger that events could lurch suddenly toward political or constitutional crisis. The tradition of regular, reliable elections and orderly transition of power is one of the glories of American democracy."

Another "one of the glories of American democracy" is the oppression of black people, which forms a key structural component of American capitalism; the ruling class wields racism to maintain a pernicious division in the working class. Whether it be "ending welfare as we know it" under Clinton, consigning already poverty-stricken families to greater privation, lining up behind the racist "war on drugs" or throwing themselves foursquare in support of the "war on terror," the Democrats have proven, and every day continue to prove, that they are no friends to black and working people. Even a longtime hustler for the Democrats (and sometime wire for the FBI), Al Sharpton, faced a barrage of hostility when he attempted to simply address the racism black people face in the United States at the Democratic National Convention in Boston this summer. (The speech of the current black Democratic rising star, Barack Obama, which whitewashed the bitter reality of racist oppression in America, went over much better.)

But while the ballot is a fundamental right, a right we tenaciously defend, fundamental change will not come through voting. It was not by the ballot that slavery met its demise; it was not by the ballot that Jim Crow was ended. Union rights did not come from Congress or the president. All the gains working people and black people have made came through their seizing them, by mass struggles on the battlefields, in the factories and on the streets, from the racist rulers.

These gains, though real, are also, as one can see from the erosion of black voting rights, reversible, and the racist, warmongering Democratic Party is no defense against the racist, warmongering Republican Party. Working people need their own party, a revolutionary party that recognizes that the fight for black freedom and the fight for the emancipation of labor are inextricably linked. We in the Spartacist League seek to build such a party to do away with the capitalist order and create an egalitarian socialist society in which the perfidies of the past shall be relegated to the history books and expunged from the lives of future generations. ■

Hotel...

(continued from page 12)

on an industrial basis. On top of this, Local 11 workers continue to work in the Wilshire Grand while their sisters and brothers are locked out! The *Los Angeles Times* (17 September) noted, "Maria Elena Durazo, president of Unite Here Local 11, said its 2,800 workers would strike if asked" by Local 52. "Asked"?! It is scandalous that workers are continuing to work a hotel where other workers are locked out! Meanwhile, Local 52 is passing around leaflets that lamely ask Wilshire Grand customers if they are "having *Problems* with your *Linen Service*," while making clear that the union does not intend "that anyone should refuse to deliver or provide goods or services or stop work"! These developments are a stinging indictment of the UNITE HERE bureaucrats.

The potential hotel workers strike in L.A., San Francisco and D.C. is aimed at securing common hotel contract expiration dates in 2006 with six other cities and Hawaii to present a solid union front against the major national and international hotel chains. As we wrote in "For a Solid Strike! For a National Contract! Hotel Workers Confront Bosses' Union Busting (*WV* No. 832, 17 September): "The bosses' strong-arm unity must be met with the strong, united determination of the labor movement, *a solid hotel workers strike shutting down the hotels with mass pickets that no one crosses!* " *Organize the hotels on an industrial basis!*

In Queens, the workers are striking for union recognition and against miserable working conditions and humiliating treatment by the bosses. A young black woman told *Workers Vanguard*, "I work seven days a week, 365 days a year, on call. I have to call at 7 o'clock every morning. I have two small children to worry about. I barely make enough money to pay the babysitter. I'm only making $10 an hour, not even 40 hours. I've never made five days." She explained that workers qualify for medical after three months, and many, like her, cannot afford the $65 per week for benefits. Another worker told *WV*, "The workers that are for the union, they get harassed. They treat us like children. They want to write you up if you punch in a minute too late or [out] a minute early. They want to assign a time for us to go to the cafeteria and eat like little kids in school." Indeed, the bosses' attitude was most despicably expressed by one Martin Fields, owner of the New York City airport motels, who said, "I feel like my children are rebelling" (*New York Times*, 23 September)! He went on to describe the union as a "cult," blathering on, "Think of Jim Jones. You just get them to drink the Kool-Aid," referring to the mass cult suicide in Guyana in 1978!

UNITE HERE is attempting to establish common contract expiration dates nationally for hotel workers, as well as common expiration dates for casino workers, while conducting organizing drives. To win, the union has to rely on its own power and the mobilization of its allies in labor. Given the composition of this workforce, the struggle to organize the hotel industry is also a struggle for immigrant, black and women's rights.

In order for the working class to fight for its interests, it has to be independent of and in opposition to the capitalist rulers. The labor movement must oppose U.S. imperialist adventures abroad and the capitalists' drive to increase the exploitation of workers at home, as well as the "war on terror," which means increased attacks on immigrants, black people and the working class. This means a fight to build a new class-struggle leadership in the unions to replace the pro-capitalist union bureaucracy that keeps working people chained to their capitalist enemies, most often through support to the Democratic Party. *Victory to the hotel workers!* ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

AP

Economist

1965: In Selma, Alabama state troopers attack black civil rights demonstrators marching against racist voter registration procedures. 2000: Protesters against racist intimidation of black voters in Florida.

Black Disenfranchisement and American "Democracy"

Finish the Civil War! For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In the 2000 elections, Florida made headlines across the globe as its electoral machinery worked to spit out a result favorable to George W. Bush—an outcome subsequently assured by the blatantly partisan intervention of the U.S. Supreme Court, whose chief justice, William Rehnquist, launched his career 40 years ago by purging blacks from Arizona's voter rolls. While confusing ballots that led many old Jewish women to vote for sinister rightist Patrick Buchanan dominated the news, black people were the target of a concerted effort to rob them of their right to vote. Police roadblocks barred the ways to polling places, and many black people who managed to get through found themselves barred from voting even if they carried a voter registration card.

Nearly 140,000 black men in Florida were denied suffrage in the last presidential election due to felony convictions, many of them resulting from the racist, bipartisan "war on drugs." In Jacksonville, an astounding 9 percent of ballots cast were invalidated, over a third of them cast by black people. Meanwhile, over in Missouri, the corpse of Democrat Mel Carnahan beat the still breathing John Ashcroft, now Bush's Attorney General, for a seat in the U.S. Senate in a stinging repudiation of Ashcroft's fanatical conservatism—and with a heavy turnout of black voters.

Florida was not alone. In many black precincts in Chicago, as many as one in six ballots were tossed out. The Republicans have forgotten none of this and are hatching new plans to prevent black people, who overwhelmingly vote Democrat, from voting. A Republican state legislator in the bitterly contested state of Michigan, John Pappageorge, has stated bluntly, "If we do not suppress the Detroit vote [in a city that is over 80 percent black], we're going to have a tough time in this election" (*New York Times*, 13 September). Florida election officials drafted a list of those disqualified due to past felony convictions; of some 48,000 felons, roughly 22,000 were blacks. Strikingly, the list included only 61 Hispanics, who in southern Florida are largely anti-Castro *gusano* reactionaries, a key Republican constituency.

These are nothing less than a frontal attack on the basic democratic right of blacks to vote. While there is not a candidate in this election who represents the interests of workers, black people and other oppressed minorities, we are intransigent defenders of the hard-won right to vote. The bloody Civil War that smashed chattel slavery won black men the right of the franchise, which was then largely stripped from them in the South during the Jim Crow era. Black people in the South regained voting rights through the courageous struggles of the civil rights movement—struggles that faced brutal police repression and KKK nightriding terror. Civil rights activists Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner and James Chaney, whose bodies were dredged from a muddy dam in Neshoba County, Mississippi in 1964, were among those lynched for fighting for black people's right to the franchise.

In a throwback to that era, Florida's

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Victory to NYC Airport Hotel Workers Strike!

Fight L.A. Hotel Laundry Worker Lockout!

n September 22, 150 hotel workers in Queens, New York went on strike against three airport hotels—the Holiday Inn and the Hampton Inn near Kennedy and the Crowne Plaza near La Guardia—after management fired ten workers active in union organizing. Led by the New York Hotel Trades Council, an umbrella organization for the area locals of UNITE HERE hotel workers union, the strikers are rightly calling on pilots, flight attendants and others who normally patronize the hotels not to use them during the strike. Meanwhile, on September 16, just two days after 10,000 union hotel workers in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike, the Wilshire Grand hotel staged a provocation by locking out 17 laundry workers in UNITE HERE Local 52, which has been in negotiations with the hotel.

With no warning, the laundry workers, reporting for work at 6:00 a.m., just hours after their contract expired, were summarily handed the following notice by management: "You Are Hereby LOCKED OUT Until Further Notice. Do Not Attempt To Enter The Facilities." Many of these workers have worked at the hotel for decades. The laundry workers' lockout is an explicit challenge to UNITE HERE to strike. John Stoddard, Wilshire Grand general manager and outspoken member of the Hotel Employers Council, said he took the action knowing it could prompt a strike, bragging, "We brought in replacement workers. We had them all lined up in case this happened" (*Los Angeles Times*, 17 September).

These workers were easily targeted because the union tops did not merge the laundry workers in Local 52 (formerly a UNITE local) into the general hotel workers UNITE HERE Local 11 in July when the national merger of UNITE and HERE took place, so that *all* hotel workers would be organized

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WV Photo

September 25: Striking hotel workers in Queens demand union recognition.

WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 834 C-701 15 October 2004

Government Seizes Servers

Protest FBI Crackdown on Indymedia!

OCTOBER 12—With no warning, commercial Web site provider Rackspace was invaded on October 7 in London by government agents under a U.S. court order. Rackspace handed over two computer servers hosting Indymedia Web sites. The seizure affected over 20 world sites, including in Britain, France, Brazil, Italy, Germany and Poland. According to an 11 October Independent Media Center Web posting, "An FBI spokesperson, Joe Parris, confirmed to Agence France-Presse that the FBI issued a subpoena to the provider who hosted the Indymedia servers in the U.K., but that it was 'on behalf of a third country'." The posting also stated that a federal prosecutor in Switzerland has opened a criminal investigation into Indymedia, and that an Italian prosecutor is investigating Italy Indymedia because it may "support terrorism."

The Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee vehemently protest this outrageous, obviously vindictive and chilling raid on a major source of independent journalism and left-wing social activism. The U.S.'s "war on terrorism" means terror against any potential political dissent. Indymedia (Independent Media Center) isn't just a worldwide online collective providing independent, uncensored news, interactive commentary, video, radio and photos. Because it's the "go-to" source for instant streaming information on international anti-globalization and other social protests, it's no wonder that Indymedia is also a thorn in the side of the American empire's global police.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), representing over 500,000 journalists worldwide, has called for an investigation in an October 8 statement. Its general secretary, Aidan White, stated: "We have witnessed an intolerable and intrusive international police operation against a network specialising in independent journalism. The way this has been done smacks more of intimidation of legitimate journalist inquiry than crime-busting."

The international journalists' organization stated: "The IFJ believes the seizure may be linked to a September 30 court case in San Jose California, in which Indymedia San Francisco and two students at Swarthmore College in

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Defend the Palestinian People!

Zionist Butchers Strike Gaza

Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!
U.S. Out of Iraq!

OCTOBER 12—In a murderous rampage paralleling that in Jenin two years ago, Israel's rulers have slaughtered some one hundred Palestinian men, women and children in the densely populated and impoverished Gaza Strip in less than two weeks. The targets of the Israeli offensive: a kindergarten serving about 500 of the children of Jabaliya refugee camp, bulldozed to the ground; stores serving Palestinian workers, demolished; swaths of orchards, farmland, water wells and greenhouses, destroyed; roads, power lines and possibly hundreds of homes, leveled. One teenage girl was shot in the head as she baked bread with her mother, another as she swept the floor in front of her door. Nine small children were wounded when an Israeli shell careened into the house where families had assembled them for safety, while a deaf-mute man was shot and killed when he tried to look out his window.

The pretext for the latest round of Zionist mass murder—"Operation Days of Penitence"—is the killing of four Israelis by makeshift rockets fired from Gaza. The bitter reality of Sharon's promise to evacuate Gaza has been an increasing number of Palestinians killed. Surrounded by the desert, the sea and an electrified fence, Gaza resembles a giant concentration camp where over 1.4 million Palestinians languish in destitution. It is symptomatic of how frequent the Israeli mass killings of Palestinians have become that there is barely a pretense of condemnation by the "international community" and virtually no protest on the streets, either in the Near East or elsewhere. The situation cries out for labor-centered protest internationally against the Zionist murder machine. ***Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories!***

Reuters photos

Israeli tank on edge of Gaza, October 6. Palestinian medics with children injured when tank shell struck their home in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza.

In the midst of the Israeli terror operation, on October 7 three bombing attacks at Sinai vacation resorts near Egypt's border with Israel killed at least 33 and wounded some 150 people, mostly vacationing Israelis. Whoever carried out these bombings, these were criminal acts of indiscriminate terror: the enemy of the Palestinians is not the Hebrew-speaking people, but the Israeli capitalist rulers whose tanks are firing into their homes. Indiscriminate attacks on innocent Israeli citizens are not only abhorrent, but serve to ideologically drive the Hebrew-speaking population toward its own ruling class.

Though the Zionist butchers have the whip hand, the Near East provides ample evidence of the genocidal logic of all nationalism. What drives the bloody cycle of Zionist slaughter and Palestinian defiance and despair is the root cause of this conflict: two peoples lay claim to the same land. There can be no equitable resolution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples under capitalism. The Zionist state was created through the expulsion of some 700,000 Arabs in 1948—"The Catastrophe" (*Al Naqba*), commemorated to this day by Palestinians.

The current invasion of Gaza takes place against the backdrop of growing support within Israel for the forcible expulsion of all Palestinians from "Greater Israel." A *New York Times* (10 October) article quotes a doctor treating the wounded at a Gaza hospital: "The catastrophe of 1948 will not be repeated. We say, 'We will die here, but we will not leave here'." The only way to ultimately prevent yet more catastrophes on the scale of 1948—and to realize the national rights of the Palestinians without denying those of the Hebrew-speaking people—lies in workers revolutions to smash all the capitalist regimes in the region.

Those who look to seemingly more "realistic" solutions like the United Nations—which on this occasion as on countless others considered and, after a U.S. veto, rejected a call to halt the Zionist offensive—only ignore the horrific lessons of the history of the Near East. The UN is an assembly of the imperialist powers and their semicolonial victims. It was the UN that presided over the establishment of the state of Israel at the expense of the dispossessed Palestinian people in 1948. Countless

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Exchange on the Million Worker March

You Can't Build a Workers Party by Fronting for Democrats

6 September 2004

Comrades

In WV 831 "Million Worker March: Tail of Lesser-Evilism," you write "Workers who want a genumely independent workers party must raise their own class-struggle banners at the MWM in October." Is this an agitational call?

I would hope that that is the first sign of a serious mobilization. The LBL nationally and supporters in the unions would be a good way to mobilize for a class-struggle contingent for the MWM.

The existence of the MWM and the fact that unions are endorsing it in the face of the AFL-CIO "stay away" order must reflect real pressure from the ranks. The existence of an integrated contingent intervening into the demo would intersect the kind of workers from *around the country* that the Party is looking for.

[unsigned]

19 September 2004

To the Editor:

The Spartacist article (Million Worker March: Tail of Lesser Evilism, 3 Sept. 2004), which I agree with in many areas such as the need for a working class party dedicated to socialism, confuses at least two different things in order to get the reader to dismiss the MWM:

First, the ILWU Local 10 resolution recognizes that outsourcing is a problem; it does not call for or support protectionism, as you allege. The two are not the same, at all. In fact, the demands also call for "The cancellation of all corporate 'free' trade agreements,..." and "An end to privatization...and the pitting of workers against each other across national boundaries in a mad race to the bottom." Is this also "protectionist"? Will you also assert that everyone who opposes the bosses' "free trade" agreements supports protectionism too? This is ridiculous reasoning, done to confuse the reader with false assumptions.

Like it or not, outsourcing *is* a tool to increase profits by breaking unions, paying workers less, eliminating benefits, etc. Your article turns that recognition into protectionism as a solution ("...any form of support for 'America First' nationalism..."), but the MWM *never* calls for protectionism. You should withdraw such statements. Better yet, be a bit self-critical and change your approach, comrades. Do you ever wonder why so many good activists turn away from you? Do you think they're all just "reformists"? Misleading people by putting false words in others' mouths leaves a bad taste. I can tell you it pissed me off, for sure.

Your creating this fiction is like Bush telling us that since Saddam's regime tortured and terrorized Iraqi people (true) that his regime was connected with 9-11 when, in life, there was no connection at all. In fact, his secular fascist regime hunted and tortured the Islamicists as well.

To take another analogy, if we hate the Bush regime, does that automatically mean that we support Kerry? No, and recognizing outsourcing as the bosses' tool doesn't automatically mean supporting protectionism either. Stop making straw-men to knock down. Do you imagine that this makes you look oh-so-revolutionary?

Second, the article says that "The only way to fight for the interests of working people and the oppressed is to build a workers party that will build the struggle for...socialist revolution." So, all other fights not for such a party and revolution are not fights for working peoples' interests? Really? Then the great sit-downs and battles of the 30s weren't "for the interests of working people" because none of them were for "a workers' party that will build the struggle for...socialist revolution," were they? Maybe you mean that we need such a party and such a system to keep our gains and build a better world. That's totally different from what you say and use to criticize a movement for clear class demands. If you demand that all struggles meet your criteria, you guarantee that you and your followers will always be on the sidelines and never in the struggle.

In effect, you're saying people struggling for working class demands must agree with the need for socialist revolution for you to support it. Some united front you can build. Hell, we'd never ever even get a union, better pay, health benefits, or launch a fight against racist treatment if we all had to agree with that first. Your approach is so sectarian; it also helps justify your keeping your hands "clean." Lenin and Trotsky advised otherwise: they'd laugh their heads off at your approach.

Of course, the MWM has contradictory politics involved, like any real fight. It came from a union, not a vanguard party. Everyone I know wants to continue this fight after Oct. 17th; how to do that will raise many serious questions and issues. Keeping to your sectarian and misleading approach only guarantees your further isolation from those who see themselves in these demands and this March.

For the revolutionaries reading this, Lenin and his comrades made it a principle to be *with* the workers even when the struggle didn't follow bolshevik politics and was clearly reformist. Even when they went to petition the Czar instead of wage class struggle against his regime. Even when masses of workers and peasants volunteered to fight in WWI as cannon fodder for the regime. They didn't stand aside and criticize from the towers.

Or take the IWW, they didn't stay out of workers' struggles to wait for perfection either. They didn't insist that workers sign on for "One big union" before they took up strikes and led free speech fights. When workers join a union, no one demands that they agree with everything "the union" stands for either. Same with this March.

Let's not use Marx's words to justify pointing fingers and calling names from the sidelines. Marx spent years working to help inject and develop the class consciousness of active workers in his day; he didn't misstate workers' goals and condemn them for not having achieved his worldview and conclusions.

Get your hands "dirty," comrades: many workers see this as a good thing, which it is. The demands are good, as you admit. Help get the word out, not turn your holier-than-thou back.

The water's fine, muddy, and not perfect.

Earl Silbar,
midwest coordinator,
MWM, AFSCME 3506

***WV* Replies:** It is Brother Silbar who concocts a straw man to dismiss our criticisms of the Million Worker March (MWM). Take how he deals with our statement, "The only way to fight for the interests of working people and the oppressed is to build a workers party that will lead the struggle for the emancipation of labor through socialist revolution and the establishment of a workers government" (slightly misquoted by Silbar). While claiming to agree with the need for a workers party, he absurdly says we deny the possibility of any victories short of socialist revolution. But as our article said, "Workers who want a genuinely

TROTSKY

LENIN

For Workers Revolution!

In his 1891 introduction to Karl Marx's Wage Labour and Capital *(1849), Friedrich Engels described the exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class and explained the necessity for proletarian revolution to overturn the bourgeois order.*

It is the working class alone which produces all values. For value is only another expression for labour, that expression whereby in our present-day capitalist society is designated the amount of socially necessary labour contained in a particular commodity. These values produced by the workers do not, however, belong to the workers. They belong to the owners of the raw materials, machines, tools and the reserve funds which allow these owners to buy the labour power of the working class. From the whole mass of products produced by it, the working class, therefore, receives back only a part for itself. And as we have just seen, the other part, which the capitalist class keeps for itself and at most has to divide with the class of landowners, becomes larger with every new discovery and invention, while the part falling to the share of the working class (reckoned per head) either increases only very slowly and inconsiderably or not at all, and under certain circumstances may even fall.

But these discoveries and inventions which supersede each other at an ever-increasing rate, this productivity of human labour which rises day by day to an extent previously unheard of, finally give rise to a conflict in which the present-day capitalist economy must perish. On the one hand are immeasurable riches and a superfluity of products which the purchasers cannot cope with; on the other hand, the great mass of society proletarianised, turned into wage-workers, and precisely for that reason made incapable of appropriating for themselves this superfluity of products. The division of society into a small, excessively rich class and a large, propertyless class of wage-workers results in a society suffocating from its own superfluity, while the great majority of its members is scarcely, or even not at all, protected from extreme want. This state of affairs becomes daily more absurd and—more unnecessary. It *must* be abolished, it *can* be abolished. A new social order is possible in which the present class differences will have disappeared and in which—perhaps after a short transitional period involving some privation, but at any rate of great value morally—through the planned utilisation and extension of the already existing enormous productive forces of all members of society, and with uniform obligation to work, the means for existence, for enjoying life, for the development and employment of all bodily and mental faculties will be available in an equal measure and in ever-increasing fullness.

—Friedrich Engels, 1891 Introduction to *Wage Labour and Capital* by Karl Marx (1849)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS Alison Spencer

EDITOR Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

EDITORIAL BOARD Rosemary Patenque (managing editor), Susan Fuller (production manager), Bruce André, Jon Brule, Helen Cantor, Paul Cone, George Foster, Kathleen Harris, Walter Jennings, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

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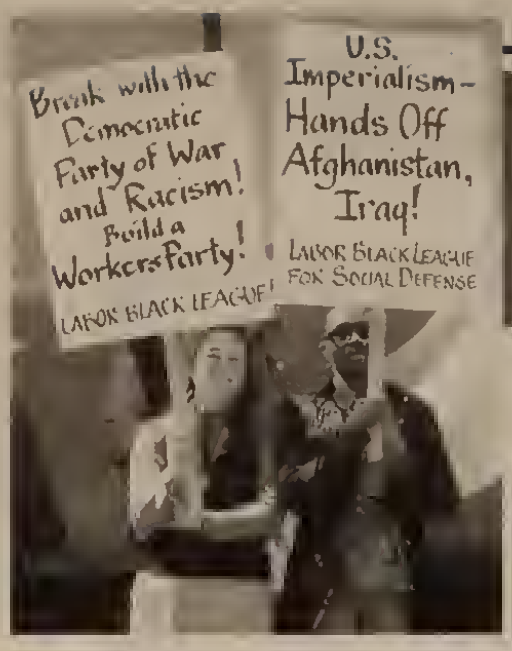
The closing date for news in this issue is 12 October

No. 834 **15 October 2004**

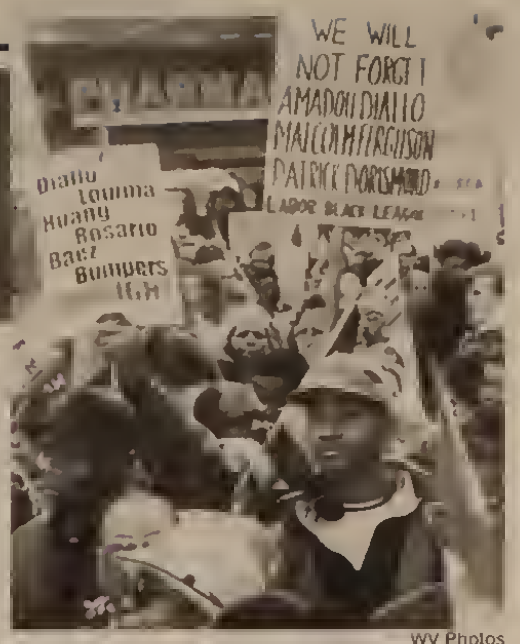
Crowley/NY Times

Democratic politicians Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton stump for Kerry at Miami church, October 10. Jackson is a featured speaker at Million Worker March.



Join the Labor Black Leagues!

The first Labor Black Leagues were formed as a result of the Spartacist League-initiated, 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization that stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, D.C. in November 1982. We stand for mobilizing the masses of minority and working people in militant integrated struggle against the brutal system of racist oppression that is capitalist America. Initiated by and fraternally allied with the Spartacist League, a multiracial revolutionary Marxist organization, the Labor Black Leagues are part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.



WV Photos

If You Stand For—

1 Full rights for black people and for everyone else in jobs, housing and schools! Defeat the racist assault on affirmative action! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Open up the universities to all—for open admissions, free tuition and a full living stipend for all students. Free, quality, integrated public education for all!

2 A fighting labor movement—picket lines mean don't cross! Defeat police seabherding and strikebreaking through mass pickets and union defense guards! For sit-down strikes against mass layoffs! Fight union-busting: keep the capitalist courts out of the unions! Organize the unorganized, unionize the South! Jobs for all—for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay with full cost-of-living escalator clause! Cops, prison guards and security guards out of the unions!

3 Fight for women's rights! Defend abortion clinics! Free abortion on demand; free, quality 24-hour childcare! Equal pay for equal work! For free, quality health care for all!

4 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants: everyone who made it into this country has the right to stay and live decently! Stop deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Semitic, anti-Arab and anti-Asian bigotry!

5 Defend the separation of church and state! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt—cops and courts out of the bedroom! Down with all laws against consensual activities such as "crimes without victims" like pornography, gambling, drugs and prostitution!

6 Mass labor/black/Hispanic mobilizations drawing on the power of the unions against the racist terrorists. Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

7 Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all victims of racist capitalist repression! No faith in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! Defend victims of cop terror and racist police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or community control of the police! Down with the racist and anti-labor "war on drugs"! For decriminalization of drugs! For class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense: support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee!

8 Unconditional opposition to every attempt to abolish welfare! Down with slave-labor, union-busting "workfare" schemes! Fight any and every attempt of the government to take away or cut back even more social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, public health and aid to education and housing! For a massive program of public works—high-quality integrated housing, schools, libraries, hospitals for the working people and the poor!

9 Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! For international working-class solidarity! Support revolutionary struggles of working people abroad! Defend the deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—against capitalist restoration and imperialist attack! For proletarian political revolution to oust their Stalinist bureaucracies! For labor action against U.S. imperialist war moves and military adventures! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean!

10 Down with the Democrats and Republicans! For a revolutionary workers party that champions the cause of all the oppressed! Finish the Civil War! Those who labor must rule! For a workers government to take industry away from its racist, incompetent and corrupt owners! Rebuild America on a socialist planned economy!

—Join the Labor Black Leagues!

Membership pledge is $3/year unemployed; $10/year employed.

For more information, contact:

CHICAGO (312) 563-0441
Labor Black Struggle League
Box 6938, Chicago, IL 60680

NEW YORK (212) 267-1025
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 2502, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10008

OAKLAND (510) 839-0851
Labor Black League for Social Defense
Box 29497, Oakland, CA 94604

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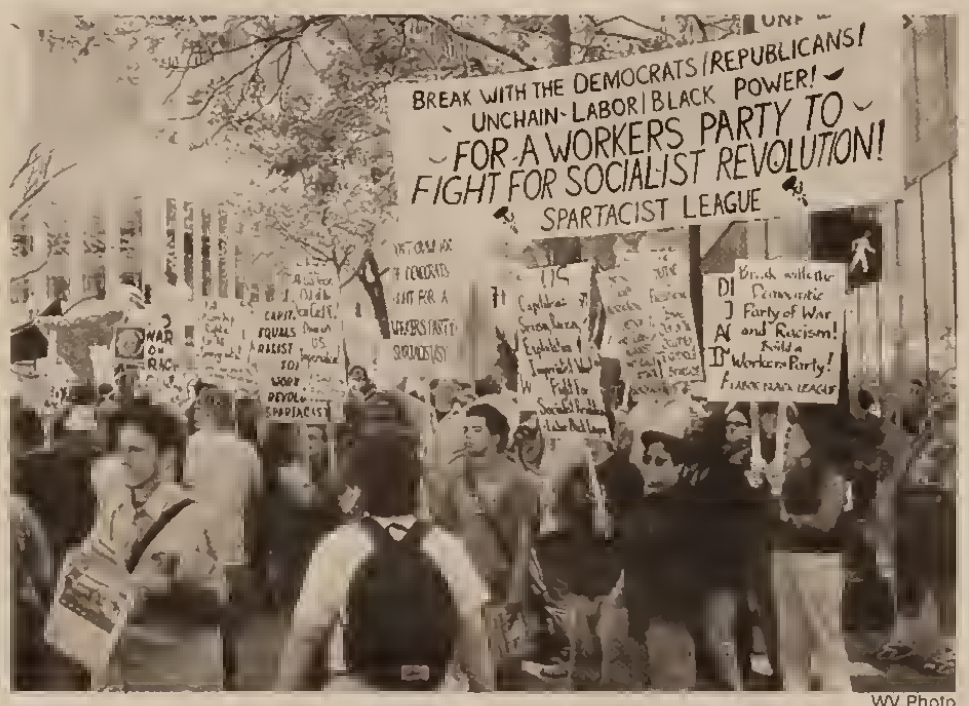
independent workers party must raise their own class-struggle banners at the MWM in October." And in response to both letters, we will be there, distributing our press and fighting to win workers away from the politics of "lesser-evilism" and to our revolutionary perspective.

But there is a difference between intervening into an event and political endorsement of an action, which indicates political agreement. The SL/U.S. is not in political accord with the fundamentally reformist politics of the MWM, and this is what really rankles Silbar. He objects to our program, in particular our insistence that there can be no independent political mobilization of labor that does not *explicitly* break from the capitalist Democratic Party. Thus Silbar asks, "If we hate the Bush regime, does that automatically mean that we support Kerry?", answering: "No." True—but in the middle of an election campaign, MWM leaders call to dump Republican Bush while the MWM platform keeps mum on a vote for Democrat Kerry. It doesn't take a Marxist to hear the unambiguous message: Vote Kerry.

Our article maintained that the MWM's pretense of being an "independent mobilization of working people" is designed to get out the vote among workers who are not very happy with Kerry and the Democrats. It is thus no surprise that leading black Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Jesse Jackson Sr. have recently endorsed the MWM. And at the October 10 Bay Area organizing committee meeting for the MWM, it was made clear by ILWU Local 10 official Clarence Thomas that Jackson, whose longtime role has been to rope in workers and blacks to vote Democrat, will speak from the platform. The response by the fake-socialist organizations in attendance



WV Photo

Spartacists raise call for workers party at April 2003 antiwar protest in Oakland.

was at best meek acceptance: members of Socialist Organizer and ANSWER voted in favor! While the MWM is having Jackson speak from its platform, they are excluding one of the MWM's own backers, Steve Zeltzer—who despite his slimy social-democratic politics is at least a part of the workers movement—on the pretext that he is a candidate for office in the Bay Area.

Silbar deliberately takes out of context our statement about the necessity of building a workers party to fight for the interests of working people and the oppressed. We said this not in relation to trade-union struggles against the bosses, but to pose the only genuine alternative to "the loathsome Bush administration" given that "no such alternative exists with Democrat John Kerry." But even the kinds of trade-union struggles Silbar mentions consistently raise gritty political questions such as the nature of the capitalist state and the necessity to mobilize the working class in the fight for black rights.

Since the domination and division of the globe by the imperialist powers became complete early last century, the world entered an epoch of decaying capitalism, "when, in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards; when every serious demand of the proletariat and even every serious demand of the petty-bourgeoisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state," in the words of the 1938 Transitional Program written by Leon Trotsky.

Far from implying that workers' defensive struggles are futile, this reality makes it imperative for every such struggle to be linked up with the need for socialist revolution. For example, the powerful upsurge of the 1930s which produced the CIO was politically contained by the labor bureaucrats with the help of the supposedly Marxist Communist Party—these forces succeeded in keeping workers tied to Roosevelt and the Democrats, thereby heading off the development of a conscious working-class challenge to capitalist rule. The rotten fruit of that betrayal can be seen all around in the decline of the labor movement under the misleadership of the current pro-capitalist bureaucracy.

Another excellent case in point is outsourcing, or what the AFL-CIO tops call the "export of our jobs," thereby violating the most elementary norms of international class solidarity and underlining their allegiance to American capital sm. Brother Silbar accuses us of falsely calling an International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 resolution and the Million Worker March "protectionist." Silbar has no trouble putting false words in *our* mouth—we said no such thing. We quoted MWM organizer and ILWU Local 10 official Clarence Thomas, denouncing "the systematic outsourcing of our jobs to areas of the world where workers can be exploited even more ruthlessly." We then noted that Thomas had "on many occasions supported international labor solidarity," but went on to underline that "any form of support for 'America First' economic nationalism puts you in bed with your own bourgeoisie."

It is incumbent on anyone who claims

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Young Spartacus

Young Spartacus photos

Left: United-front rally at CCSF, October 7. Right: Later, demonstrators from campus rally join UNITE HERE pickets at San Francisco Hilton.

SYC Initiates United-Front Rally at CCSF

Victory to the San Francisco Hotel Workers Strike!

SAN FRANCISCO—On October 7 the Spartacus Youth Club helped mobilize students and workers at the City College of San Francisco (CCSF) in a united-front rally in support of the UNITE HERE Local 2 hotel workers strike. Over a dozen groups and individuals endorsed the rally—leftists, student leaders, a women's organization, campus clubs representing minority groups and a trade unionist—under the slogans, "*Students Support the Hotel Workers! Protest the Union-Busting Lockout! Victory to the UNITE HERE Strike!*"

The Spartacus Youth Club initiated this rally at CCSF in order to build support for the strike, to bring students to the picket lines and win them to the active support of this crucial class battle in one of the most expensive cities in the U.S. The UNITE HERE strike in San Francisco is part of a national effort by hotel workers here, as well as in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., to win common contract expiration dates with workers in six other cities and Hawaii. This would give their combined 60,000 workers much greater weight in dealing with national hotel chains.

San Francisco's 8,000-strong Local 2 is facing the Multi-Employer Group (MEG), which represents the 14 hotels involved. On September 29 1,400 workers went on a two-week strike at four of those hotels. Two days later, MEG locked out the 2,600 workers at the other ten affected hotels. The union is also fighting against the bosses' attempt to raise medical premiums from the current $10 to over $270 a month in a workforce that for the most part makes only $9 to $15 an hour. Additionally, the union rejects the insulting offer of "pay raises" of 5 to 20 *cents* an hour.

UNITE HERE workers also are striking seven casinos in Atlantic City as part of a similar drive to synchronize contract expirations with Las Vegas and other casino hotels. Meanwhile, workers at the Chicago Congress Hotel have been on strike for over a year. At a Los Angeles UNITE HERE Local 11 rally on October 5, the cops arrested 44 unionists and sympathizers demonstrating in support of the locked-out San Francisco hotel workers in front of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. We say: ***Drop all charges now!***

Mobilizing Students Behind the Power of the Working Class

The CCSF rally of dozens attracted a lot of attention, and students stopped to listen and check out the SYC's Marxist literature. The DJs from Student Activities who were helping out with sound started off by playing Michael Jackson's "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'," which was not only fitting for the occasion but also sparked some moonwalking as people gathered to listen to the speeches. Reflecting CCSF's heavily immigrant and minority composition, many of those who joined the rally were black, Latino or of Asian descent, mirroring the ethnic composition of the UNITE HERE workforce. Several students were attracted by our Chinese-language signs at our literature table, and the demonstration also received a write-up in the Chinese-language newspaper *Ming Pao*.

Other student groups that endorsed did not attend in large numbers or send speakers. But some individuals, who had argued within their groups for an endorsement and distributed rally fliers, came out to the rally. A few anarchists on campus did attend and one assisted in building the rally by helping to get an announcement on the campus radio station. However, when the rally MC encouraged him to speak, he refused, stating that as an anarchist he couldn't stand on the same platform with socialists. The MC explained that he could both talk about the strike and make clear that he stood for anarchism. Despite having ample opportunity to speak and even raise his political differences with us if he chose, he let his anti-Marxism keep him from speaking to mobilize others, including fellow anarchists, in support of the strike.

A black campus worker in SEIU Local 790 decided to speak on the spot. Commenting on the importance of linking the hotel workers labor struggle to the defense of immigrant rights, she pointedly said:

> "There are lots of people who have lost their children and lost their husbands to deportation. We're fighting against deportation. You need to understand that if these people actually get a hold of the workers that are downtown, then they will be after us next."

As SYC speaker Mike Retondo explained, "These attacks come hand in hand with the so-called 'war on terror,' which is just an excuse for the U.S. imperialist rulers to increase the state repression against workers, leftists, immigrants, blacks and other minorities. We say: ***Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!***"

In building for this united front, our comrades talked to students who also work in the hotels and are on strike or whose parents or relatives are on strike. Many others had seen or even joined the picket lines and are supportive of the strike, underlining the working-class character of the CCSF student body. We learned that a labor relations professor was requiring his students to visit the picket lines. An Asian American Studies professor let his class out so his students could attend the rally. We also talked to a black student whose friend got hired as a scab at one of the hotels. The student argued hard with his friend against scabbing because, as a former Teamster, he understood that unions fight for people to have decent lives. At the rally, the SYC MC made the point.

> "This is a pitched battle and it demands your support! ***Students must take a side! We must fight on labor's side!*** The battle is posed on this campus, which we found, in building this rally, not only includes students who are on strike as hotel workers, but also scabs that have taken over their jobs. No to scabs!"

The rally motivated a group of students to go downtown to join the picket lines, where workers applauded them.

The class line that divides this society is most evident on the picket line. Jido Cooper, speaking for the Labor Black League for Social Defense, explained to the CCSF rally:

> "There are security guards at some of these hotels, who are organized in the SEIU, who have been going in to 'work' during this strike *and lockout*. Well, of

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Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

BAY AREA

Thursday, Oct. 21, 6:30 p.m.
Decriminalize Prostitution!
Berkeley: Vote YES on Measure QI
UC Berkeley, 222 Wheeler Hall
Information and readings: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: sycbayarea@sbcglobal.net

TORONTO

Wednesday, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m.
No to Ontario's "*Sharia* Courts"!
Down With Anti-Muslim Racism!
York University Student Centre
Room 315C
Information and readings: (416) 593-4138
or e-mail: spartcan@on.aibn.com

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, Nov. 6, 2 p.m.
The State and Revolution
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

CHICAGO

Alternate Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Nov. 2: Marxist Materialism vs. Liberal Idealism
University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, Room 107
5811 S. Ellis Ave.
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

NEW YORK

Video Showing and Discussion
Tuesday, Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m.
From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal
Columbia University
325 Pupin Hall (116th and Broadway)
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nyst@compuserve.com

Visit the ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

My Night with Nader... Or Why I'd Rather Be Driving a Pinto

We print below a report from Spartacist League comrade Paula Daniels on a September 14 speaking appearance by independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader at Loyola University in Chicago.

There is nothing leftist, left-leaning or left-like about Ralph Nader and his politics. At bottom, he is a liberal reformer who is moved by the many horrors of capitalism—like Jane Addams, only without the compassion for immigrants (but all the condescension). He yearns for a past when the Democrats supposedly were a genuine second party fighting for good things (like Jim Crow or the Vietnam War?!). Apparently the root of all evil is corporatism, which for Nader breeds greed and human suffering and finished off the Democrats as a second party, giving us the "Republicrats." His goal is to get the Democrats "back on course" through building a movement of critical-minded liberals to pull the Dems onto the correct path.

Nader paints a distorted view of the glory days of the Democrats when, we are told, they won elections and fought for unions, for the poor, for jobs (well, they did win elections). In other words, let's make this "great democracy" work again. He quoted with longing Eisenhower's "Cross of Iron" speech—an apology for the Cold War with the goal of smashing the workers states, wrapped in the language of peace—and said almost nothing about Iraq until the Q&A period. Nader referred to all the advice he gives Bush and Kerry. To Nader, Kerry is losing because he didn't follow Nader's advice to ignore his corporate advisers. Nader is virulently anti-communist, and his talk was mostly a litany of capitalist crimes that he posits can be solved with better organization and priorities. The only redeeming factor about his talk was that he defended our right to speak, albeit after interrupting us.

There were about 700 people (mostly but not exclusively students) who showed up to hear him speak. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) was all over this thing. Quite a few people expressed agreement as I hawked *WV* saying, "Break with the Democrats! No vote to Nader! Build a revolutionary workers party to fight for a workers government!" This also drove the *Socialist Worker* salesmen crazy, some of whom were pitching their paper by saying, "A vote to Nader is a vote to end the occupation of Iraq!" I had a long exchange with an ISO member about their support to Nader. His main argument was that he agreed Nader has nothing to offer working people. Nader wasn't a socialist, etc., but socialists had to get behind the campaign because it's important that "the movement" grow. For the ISO, the campaign is a start and Nader is addressing important issues. He got intensely frustrated when I kept demanding he explain to me why, if Nader has nothing to offer to working people, minorities, etc., are they telling people to support him—why isn't that building illusions in capitalism and its politicians? I did not convince him, but he was plenty distressed. Overall, the ISO was feeling some heat as we had numerous exchanges with them over the course of the evening.

The Libertarian Party gave a short rap before Nader spoke about the right to be on the ballot, followed by Students for Nader. Nader himself received a limp standing ovation—the only two ISOers I saw giving him a standing ovation were honchos Joel Geier and Joe Allen. Their masses didn't rise.

The Phoenix

Young Spartacus graphic

Ralph Nader at Loyola University, September 14. The Pinto might explode on impact, but Nader is unsavory at any speed.

After Nader's talk and before the Q&A we were held hostage by liberal activist "people's lawyer" Greg Kafoury. He worked the crowd up about how great Nader is. The most telling line which truly reveals Nader's strategy was when Kafoury (to paraphrase) talked about how if we can get a few more percentage points in this election, Kerry will flip (as opposed to flop, I guess) and then the Democratic Party will flip, and then the war can be ended. Kafoury then went on the most shameless, aggressive money-squeezing spiel.

Finally came the Q&A. By this time there were about 200-300 people left in the room. SYC comrade Amanda Higginson and I stayed for the "full Monty," so to speak, as Nader and the ISO bared all. An ISOer intervened right before we did. Basically he made a mushy intervention about how every four years there is no choice, we need an alternative, we need to build the left. The ISOer held up their flyer and invited the audience to hear "Nader's running mate" Peter Camejo speak and ended by asking Nader what University of Illinois at Chicago students can do to help and organize. Later I went after him before other ISOers and independents, exposing the fact that the ISO can sound left in private and might even criticize Nader; but when the ISO gets up in public or in front of Nader himself, it's all "build the campaign," no criticism of Nader.

Higginson intervened right after the ISO did. She began by observing that what she heard tonight was protectionism (flowing from Nader's invocation of "saving American jobs") and anti-immigrant chauvinism, pointing to his campaign banner featuring the bloody American flag. She noted that Nader is for the occupation of Iraq under the UN. Identifying herself as an SYCer, she said she wanted to address "those of you who are looking for a real alternative." Some in the crowd were heckling her, with Nader himself interrupting to say, "I heard this same thing last night [at Michigan State University]. Put your notes away and tell me what *you* think, not what someone wrote down for you to say." She kept on, raising her voice amid heckles, to say that Nader is appealing to those who are disaffected but with the intent to keep their dissent within the bounds of the capitalist system. Nader wants to pressure the Democrats to the left—but the Democrats are the party of slavery, Hiroshima and Vietnam, and were never a party of the workers and oppressed. Groups like the ISO not only buy Nader's "alternative" but are out there fighting for it—thus they are an obstacle to raising consciousness about the need to overthrow the capitalist system. Capitalism is a profit-driven system which was just as vicious before corporations existed. As long as there is capitalism, there will be oppression. We need a workers party to fight for a workers government! She held up *Workers Vanguard*.

I spoke a few people later. I identified myself and defended my comrade against Nader's insulting anti-communist heckling. This got some applause. I went on to point out that people are hungry for answers, for solutions and hungry for change. The Democrats and Republicans are so indistinguishable that a guy like Nader comes along, lists the many horrors of capitalism and looks like some sort of alternative—but beware, he's not. Nader basically is a small businessman with a program to match—opposition to unions in his own business (which he didn't deny), American-jobs-first protectionism, anti-immigration, more to the right than many conservatives on China. His ideas are all within the bounds of capitalism, just redistribute and reorganize the wealth within this same rotting system. He interrupted me to ask me what our position on immigration *is*. I told him I would get to it when I finished my remarks—we had a short go around, as I too got heckled by those who love the First Amendment until the "commies" get up. Nader actually defended me, telling the hecklers to let me finish.

I pointed at Nader and said—you make it clear you are for capitalism, you have no pretense of being a Marxist or leftist—I completely disagree with you but you say who you are. The real crime, I said, were groups like the ISO and Socialist Alternative (SAlt) who claim to be socialists and are telling people to vote for Nader. Any time a socialist tells you to vote for a capitalist politician, you better hold on to your political wallet. I addressed the need to fight for our own party—a fighting revolutionary workers party—and break with the Democrats, no support/vote to Nader. The lefties were heckling me by this point. To motivate the need to build a party now, I asked who in the reactionary 1950s had a clue of the mass struggles and protests that marked the '60s? I ended by reiterating that the capitalist profit system will always be run by exactly that—profit—and that the only solution is to uproot capitalism and fight for socialist revolution. I then answered Nader's question, stating that our position on immigrants is that anyone who makes it into this country should be given full citizenship rights—this got some applause.

As for Nader, his position on immigration was expressed in an interview with Pat Buchanan (*American Conservative*, 21 June), when he said: "I don't like the idea of legalization because then the question is how do you prevent the next wave and the next?" He replied to me by completely twisting around our position, claiming it was similar to that of the *Wall Street Journal* (I shouted out that I'd never seen them call for a revolutionary workers party, but few could hear me). He asserted that we call for "open the borders," which we do not. (Even if this utopian demand could somehow be implemented, it would only allow the imperialists to more directly plunder their poorer neighbors.) Nader went into a long spiel on corporations becoming entities of themselves and taking over the world, though he was forced to admit they rely on the protection afforded by the U.S. armed forces.

Afterwards we had another go around with the ISO, though SAlt was nowhere to be seen. As well, numerous people came up and thanked us for getting up and speaking, most in agreement, some just as a show of support for speaking our minds in the face of heckling. We sold papers to most of them. My favorite was an Iranian woman and her friend who came barreling up to me and shook my hand, thanking me for speaking out in defense of immigrants. She said she came to the event supporting Nader but "tonight he dug his own grave," and she refuses to support him in any way. She correctly pointed out that he says nothing about the plight of the Palestinians. We talked about how many on the left deep-sixed this issue during the antiwar protests. It was one way in which reformist groups tailored the politics of the antiwar movement to the "dove" Democrats. Instead of pandering to liberal sentiment, we intervened in the antiwar protests as we did tonight, with the call to build an independent workers party to fight for socialist revolution. ■

Young Spartacus

New York City: Spartacist signs at August 29 anti-RNC demonstration express opposition to Democratic Party and Nader, call for revolutionary workers party.

Free Mumia...

(continued from page 12)

health cadres, food cadres, you name it. Did some dangerous work too, and studied Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon, Mao like a religious zealot."

We Want Freedom provides a riveting account of the campaign of terror leveled at Jamal and his comrades by the FBI and cops, who were determined to destroy the Panthers by any means necessary. Mumia devotes a chapter to the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO, noting, "The Bureau used its enormous power, influence, and contacts to intimidate politicians. It used the omnipresent press to hound people out of their jobs. It sabotaged allegedly free elections. It destroyed marriages. It shattered families. It fomented violence between political and social adversaries."

With characteristic modesty Jamal says not a word about his own fight for life and freedom against the racist frame-up that keeps him in the shadow of death on Pennsylvania's death row. Yet on every page of *We Want Freedom* the reader can see why the government has targeted this man for so long. Jamal was convicted in 1982 on frame-up charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981. From the moment of his arrest, the prosecution sought to hang Jamal with his BPP background. The cover photograph of *We Want Freedom* comes from a January 1970 *Philadelphia Inquirer* interview with Jamal, then a 15-year-old Black Panther Party spokesman. The interview was used by the prosecution as exhibit number one for Jamal's execution. As Jamal recalled in the 1990 Partisan Defense Committee video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, "The word Black Panther means different things to different people, depending on their perspective, depending on their history, depending on their political orientation. The prosecutor knew that exceedingly well.... I saw when it hit the jury, it was like a bolt of electricity."

To secure the death sentence for Jamal, prosecutor Joseph McGill inflamed the nearly all-white jury with the grotesque lie that Jamal's membership in the Panthers as a teenager proved he was a committed cop killer who had been planning to kill a cop for 12 years. As readers of this book will see, and as confirmed by Mumia's own COINTELPRO files, it was the kill-crazy Feds and Philly cops who planned to get Jamal "all the way back then"—i.e., from 1 May 1969, when he and his comrades made their first public appearance in a rally outside the State Building in Philadelphia to demand freedom for imprisoned Panther leader Huey P. Newton.

The Frame-Up of Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man! His case is a textbook example of a classic racist political frame-up. For three years both Pennsylvania state courts and federal courts have refused to even consider testimony from Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner, as well as a mountain of supporting evidence. They have also rejected evidence discovered over two years ago: the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried. In that conversation, judge Albert Sabo, who sentenced Jamal to death, declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n----r."

With this vulgar promise, "king of death row" Sabo speaks not just for himself but for this country's racist rulers, who waged a bloody war of disruption, frame-up and extermination against the Panthers and other radical black activists. A directive from FBI headquarters advised its agents that since the "purpose ...is to disrupt...it is immaterial whether facts exist to substantiate the charge." In 1968, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover vowed, "The Negro youth and moderate[s] must be made to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teachings, they will be dead revolutionaries." Under the ruthless COINTELPRO vendetta 38 Panthers were killed and hundreds more railroaded to scores of years in prison hellholes.

The young men and women Mumia describes lived with the awareness that every day could be their last. After Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were assassinated in a hail of bullets in the early morning hours of 4 December 1969, Mumia was one of a contingent of Philadelphia Panthers who drove to Chicago for the commemoration. Jamal recalls: "When we arrived at the office, we were walked over to the apartment and saw the holes making the walls look like Swiss cheese. We saw the mattress, caked with blood, where Fred and his fiancee lay that fateful night, the bullet holes lining the walls, tactile markers of government hate."

Four days later the cops raided BPP headquarters in Los Angeles, bombarding the Panthers with thousands of rounds of ammunition over five hours. The cops especially wanted to kill Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt). A decorated Vietnam vet, Geronimo's military knowledge had saved his life and his comrades—and the FBI and California rulers would make him pay. Before his release in 1997, Geronimo spent 27 years in prison on the lying testimony of a cop informant, Julius Butler, for a killing in Santa Monica, California that the cops and FBI knew Geronimo didn't commit. FBI wiretap logs showed Geronimo was 400 miles away from the scene of the shooting, at a Black Panther Party leadership meeting in Oakland. From the prosecutors' office, to the august judges' chambers up to the governor's mansion, many high-ranking California officials in the 1970s-80s built and maintained their careers on the war against the Panthers and the frame-up of Geronimo, who was then America's foremost class-war prisoner.

Chicago Tribune

UPI

1969: Chicago police and FBI brutally killed Panther leaders Fred Hampton (inset) and Mark Clark. Blood-soaked mattress on which Hampton was sleeping (right).

Jamal quotes Philadelphia Panther leader Reggie Schell describing one of the cop raids on the Philly Panther offices. Mumia recalls his arrest and days in jail for jaywalking on his way to sell the *Black Panther* newspaper in the streets of Oakland; how the Feds were waiting for him as he was about to board a plane for California, only to be frustrated when their search revealed he had nothing that could even be claimed to be a weapon. (Jamal was once reprimanded by a Panther cadre for falling asleep during guard duty.) Mumia also cites an account by L.A. Panther Flores Forbes of frequent "faux attacks" by the LAPD, complete with hovering police helicopters designed to shatter the nerves of individual Panthers: "The house started to rattle. The trees in our yard and across the street started to swirl." And, as Jamal describes, the cops had their own special targets. One of those in L.A. was Paul Redd, a talented artist whose highly praised work graced the pages of the *Black Panther* newspaper. When the LAPD realized who he was upon arrest, they broke the fingers of his right hand.

AP

Panthers hold armed demonstration against Mulford gun control bill in Sacramento, May 1967.

Without doubt Jamal, identified in the FBI files as one of the top three leaders in the Philadelphia BPP, was a prime target of Frank Rizzo's racist thugs in blue. The Feds decided to open a dossier on Jamal when he participated in the 1 May 1969 "Free Huey" demonstration. From that day on a steady stream of memoranda, letters, "airtels" and "nitels" between FBI headquarters and its field agents tracked Mumia's every political move.

Even with much of the text blacked out and many documents withheld outright, over 700 pages of FBI files obtained for Jamal by the Partisan Defense Committee make it clear that the FBI and cops were on a mission to use any "dirty trick" to silence the man who would become known as the "voice of the voiceless." Using its wiretaps, its informants and police spies, the government relentlessly pursued him at demonstrations, newspaper sales, political meetings and fund-raisers—even at picnics. They knew when he was to leave town and when he was to return, intercepting him as he boarded a flight and engaging in physical observation of returning flights. The Feds interrogated school officials, contacted employers, harassed Jamal's mother.

Temple University

George Fencl (right), head of Philadelphia Police Department's Civil Disobedience Unit, which assisted FBI COINTELPRO operation against Panthers.

In one typical four-week period in the summer of 1969, the FBI files include: a memorandum dated August 11 reporting that Jamal spoke at a Hiroshima Day rally in Philadelphia; a Civil Disobedience Unit (CDU) report on the same rally, also dated August 11; two "airtels" to the FBI director, dated August 14; an August 14 "FBI Notice"; an August 19 "Government Memorandum," again on the Hiroshima Day rally; and a September 4 FBI report on a Socialist Workers Party campaign rally where Mumia "spoke against the 'pigs'." Followed by a cover note dated September 5 specifically identifying "Wesley Cook, aka Wes Mumia."

The files are replete with clippings of *Black Panther* articles written by Jamal and reports of his public speeches. It was Jamal's noticeable talent as a young revolutionary journalist and propagandist that attracted so much FBI attention. A 24 October 1969 report on Jamal urged that he be placed under high-level surveillance: "In spite of the subject's age (15 years), Philadelphia feels that his continued participation in BPP activities in the Philadelphia Division, his position in the Philadelphia branch of the BPP, and his past inclination to appear and speak at public gatherings, the subject should be included on the Security Index."

Jamal was targeted for more than surveillance. His name was placed on two government hit lists: The FBI's Security Index (SI) of those deemed a "threat" to "national security" and the Administrative Index (ADEX) of those to be rounded up and thrown into concentration camps in case of a "national emergency." Many of the documents bear the notation "Smith Act," the notorious "thought crimes" legislation under which first Trotskyists and then Communist Party members were sent to prison for "advocating" revolution.

Despite the FBI's acknowledgement that Jamal "has not displayed a propensity for violence" and was not once found with a gun throughout this period of intense surveillance, the files regularly labeled him "Armed and Dangerous"—a license for the cops and G-men to shoot first and ask questions later. And they finally did shoot him, in the early morning of 9 December 1981. History is not a conspiracy, but there are conspiracies in history. We are not saying that the cops who were at the scene the night of 9 December 1981 knew Jamal was going to be there. But they were there and had the chance they had long awaited. The subsequent trial, conviction and death sentence was a political frame-up pure and simple, the culmination of a decade of efforts to "neutralize" Jamal.

The FBI records are only the tip of the iceberg. During the 1960s and '70s the Philly cops kept their own voluminous files—none of which have been made available—on some 18,000 people! There was extensive collusion between the FBI and Frank Rizzo's Philadelphia Police Department. Document after document in the FBI files lists as its source unidentified cops from the CDU or Intelligence Division. According to Rizzo's biographer, S.A. Paolantonio, the Philadelphia CDU led by George Fencl "had a steady stream of informers paid by the Federal Bureau

of Investigation. In fact, when the FBI began its counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO), the agency used Fencl's CD squad as a model."

Though COINTELPRO supposedly ended in the mid 1970s, the government vendetta against Geronimo, Dhoruba bin Wahad, Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Mondo we Langa, Ed Poindexter, Mtulu Shakur, Sekou Odinga, Delbert Orr Africa and many others never ended. As much as the prosecutors, Democratic and Republican governors, press corps and judges try to pass off Jamal's case as a simple criminal trial, its real basis is captured in a brief exchange in the trial transcript. Anyone who has sat through a criminal trial is aware that it is highly irregular for the judge to stop the proceedings to answer the phone. In June 1982, when Jamal was on trial for his life, the proceedings were interrupted just as the prosecution's key witness, prostitute Cynthia White, was about to testify:

> "THE COURT: Just a minute. Fencl is on the phone.
> "MR. McGILL: Off the record.
> "(A discussion was held off the record.)
> "THE COURT: Did you work it out?
> "MR. McGILL: There's no problem."

As the Partisan Defense Committee wrote in a special Jamal campaign issue of *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (No. 10, April 1989):

> "The death sentence for Mumia is the long arm of COINTELPRO terror reaching into the courtroom. This time they got him. Mumia has been sentenced to death because of his political beliefs, because of what he wrote, because of what he said, because of who he 'associated' with—and because of who he is."

The capitalist rulers want to see Mumia dead because they see in this eloquent journalist, MOVE supporter and former Panther spokesman the spectre of black revolution, defiant opposition to their system of racist oppression. They seek to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge vicious cop repression in the ghet-

WV Photo

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)

tos, who stand up for labor's rights on the picket lines, who protest imperialist mass murder from the Balkans to Iraq. Trade unionists, opponents of racist oppression and all opponents of the Jim Crow death penalty must mobilize to *Free Mumia Now!*

The Best of a Generation of Black Militants

> "The average young man or woman in the Black Panther Party was between seventeen and twenty-two years old, lived in a collective home with other Panthers, worked long and hard days (and sometimes nights) doing necessary Party work without pay, and owned nothing.... The average Panther rose at dawn and retired at dusk and did whatever job needed to be done to keep the programs going for the people, from brothers and sisters cooking breakfast for the school kids, to going door-to-door to gather signatures for petitions, to gathering clothes for the free clothing program, to procuring donated supplies from neighboring merchants."

We Want Freedom is a must read, not only as a necessary aid in mobilizing support for Jamal's fight for freedom. We pay tribute to this book on the only radical black organization in our times that didn't crawl to the capitalist oppressors. At the same time, we state our fundamentally counterposed proletarian revolutionary program as distinct from even the most "just" nationalism, as V.I. Lenin, leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, put it.

Ligato/Philadelphia Bulletin

Philadelphia: Black Panthers dragged onto the street, forced to strip and searched at gunpoint in 1970 raid under notorious police commissioner, later mayor, Frank Rizzo.

The Black Panther Party represented the best of a generation of black militants who courageously stood up to the racist ruling class and its kill-crazy cops. They embodied the hopes and aspirations for black freedom of an entire generation who sought to strip away the sense of powerlessness and hopelessness of the oppressed black masses, particularly in relation to the impunity of the cops in gunning down blacks on the streets of Oakland, and throughout America. But, from its inception, the BPP was based upon a contradiction: on the one hand, a subjective identification with the most oppressed black people (the working poor, the unemployed, welfare recipients, etc.), whose fundamental oppression under capitalism clearly could not be solved or even much alleviated by a few small and reversible liberal reforms; and on the other hand, the ideology of black nationalism, which denied the class basis of society and social struggle and opened the door to the BPP becoming merely another pressure group seeking to play the ethnic politics game of competing for a bigger "slice of the pie" within the status quo.

Black people in the U.S. are not a nation. They are an oppressed race-color caste segregated at the bottom of society, while forming a strategic part of the working class. The fight for black freedom is the strategic question of the American revolution. There will be no social revolution in this country without the united struggle of black and white workers led by their multiracial vanguard party.

As revolutionary Marxists we stand on the perspective of revolutionary integration. Counterposed to liberal integration —the false view that blacks can achieve social equality within the confines of racist American capitalism—revolutionary integrationism is premised on the understanding that black freedom requires smashing the capitalist system and constructing an egalitarian socialist society. As we elaborated in "Black and Red —Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," adopted at the founding conference of the Spartacist League in 1966:

> "The vast majority of black people—both North and South—are today workers who, along with the rest of the American working class, must sell their labor power in order to secure the necessities of life from those who buy labor power in order to make profit.... Ultimately their road to freedom lies only through struggle with the rest of the working class to abolish capitalism and establish in its place an egalitarian, socialist society.
>
> "Yet the struggle of the black people of this country for freedom, while part of the struggle of the working class as a whole, is more than that struggle. The Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising the most exploited layer of the American working class.... Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution."
>
> —reprinted in *Spartacist* No. 10, May-June 1967

The Black Panther Party

Formed in 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, the BPP was a direct response to the failure of the liberal, pro-Democratic Party civil rights movement to seriously challenge the nature of black oppression when that movement went North in the mid '60s. It was clear to all that the ghetto uprisings of the mid 1960s marked the end of the old civil rights movement, with the most militant blacks embracing the call for "Black Power" seeking to find a way out of the racist hell of American capitalism. Jamal is explicit: "The Black Panther Party came into existence, not to support or supplement the major civil rights organizations, but to supplant them." He describes "ghetto youth who had simmered under the glare of overtly racist cops. They longed to join the swelling Civil Rights movement, but had not because they could not bear to join any group which would meekly submit to racist violence, as demanded by some civil rights organizations." Many of these militants were inspired by Malcolm X. Although not a Marxist basing himself upon working-class struggle, Malcolm advocated armed black self-defense against racist attacks, and opposed the deceitful, venal and treacherous Democratic and Republican politicians.

The Panthers gained notoriety for their armed police monitoring patrols, in which Panthers bearing loaded weapons, law books, cameras and tape recorders would approach traffic stops to make sure the cops didn't brutalize their black victims and that the latter were informed of their rights. In April 1967, the Panthers held an armed rally in Richmond, California, to protest the killing of 22-year-old Denzil Dowell by a white deputy sheriff and faced the cops down. National attention came later that year when, demonstrating their defiance of the racist bourgeois order, the Panthers showed up armed at the California state capitol in Sacramento. The Panthers came to protest the Mulford Bill, which was referred to in the local press at the time as the "Panther bill." Before that it was legal in California to carry a loaded weapon in public as long as it wasn't concealed.

Uncertain of how much support the Panthers had in the ghetto, the cops at first demured. But beginning with the wounding and jailing of Newton in October 1967, and gaining steam with the killing of Bobby Hutton in April 1968, local cops and the FBI, operating in many cases with the assistance of "cultural nationalist" groups (for example, the 1969 murder of Los Angeles Panthers by members of Ron Karenga's US organization), launched a coordinated national campaign to wipe out the Panthers. The FBI's J. Edgar Hoover labeled the Panthers the "greatest threat to the internal security of the U.S." To kill Panthers the FBI revived COINTELPRO, the counterintelligence program that was originally implemented in 1956 against the Communist Party, and unleashed the most savage and systematic campaign of racist state terror in modern American history. Some 233 of 295 COINTELPRO actions against black organizations were against the Panthers.

In comparison to other black nationalist organizations of the 1960s, the Panthers sought to organize independently of the Democrats and Republicans. But as eclectic and contradictory radical nationalists, their outlook was variously influenced by the teachings of Malcolm X, Che Guevara, Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao—a grab bag from which to choose when it suited their current appetites. They were shaped by a unique historical conjuncture both within the U.S. and internationally—a period that saw African nations winning their formal independence, Castro's peasant guerrilla forces toppling the U.S. puppet Batista regime and the heroic Vietnamese battlefield victories against the American military behemoth.

In their public and internal communications, the Panthers compared themselves to Mao's peasant-based guerrilla army in the Chinese civil war and to the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front. In particular, they looked to the writings of Frantz Fanon, a West Indian intellectual and champion of the Algerian independence struggle. Fanon's emphasis on the cathartic role of violence became for the Panthers the basis of their talk of urban guerrilla warfare. Jamal quotes Kathleen Cleaver: Fanon's "*Wretched of the Earth* became essential reading for Black revolutionaries in America and profoundly influenced their thinking. Fanon's analysis seemed to explain and to justify the spontaneous violence ravaging Black ghettoes across the country, and linked the incipient insurrections to the rise of a revolutionary movement."

Rather than recognizing the ghetto outbursts for what they were—the final spasm of frustration and fury in the wake of a movement that had raised great hopes and activated enormous energy only to accomplish little—wishful-thinking leftists saw in the ghetto-police battles the beginning of mass revolutionary violence which presumably had merely to be organized to be made effective. The notion that the ghetto was a base for urban guerrilla warfare was common not only among black nationalists, but was accepted by most of the left. What distinguished the Panthers was their willingness to face jail and even death for this theory.

The ghetto uprisings did not give the black masses a sense of their own power. They did just the opposite. It was black

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Free Mumia...

(continued from page 7)

peoples' own homes that were burned down. The cops went on a killing rampage. These proved that police brutality was not an isolated injustice that could be eliminated through militant action. The cops are an essential part of the armed force of the capitalist state; if defeated locally, they came back with the National Guard or Army. To drive and keep out the cops from the ghettos is equivalent to overthrowing the American state. As long as the majority of white workers remained loyal or only passively hostile to the government, black activism could not liberate the ghetto.

Fanon's writings played a significant part in the Panthers' belief that the lumpenproletariat, especially street-wise ghetto youth, were the vanguard of the American revolution. We warned at the time that "a political movement which isolates itself in a social milieu hostile to normal work-a-day society must become irresponsible, individualistic, and ultimately cynical and contemptuous of the mass of working people" ("Rise and Fall of the Panthers: End of the Black Power Era," *WV* No. 4, January 1972). In the end, the Panthers were destroyed not only by police terror from without but a murderous internal factionalism inflamed by COINTELPRO provocations.

The Panthers never found the only road leading to the destruction of the racist bourgeois order—the multiracial proletariat. As self-described "revolutionary nationalists" the Panthers shared with the predominantly white New Left a rejection of the centrality and strategic social power of the integrated labor movement in the struggle against brutal racial oppression and imperialist war as well as capitalist exploitation.

There was a palpable basis to link the ghetto to the factories to wage a militant struggle against the killer cops. This required a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement. In 1970 the postal workers had the first national strike against the federal government. Auto plants were seething with rebellions. In 1969, the Panthers briefly formed a caucus at the Fremont, California GM plant and even put out a few issues of a plant newspaper. Panther Chief of Staff David Hilliard had been a longshoreman for a while, and his brother June, a party member, was a city bus driver. The Panthers knew there were white workers at a union oil facility whose heads were being beaten by the scabherding cops, workers who took up the Panthers' characterizations of the cops as "pigs." But, instead, the Panthers turned to "community work"—local programs which seek at best to partially ameliorate some of the deprivations of ghetto life without challenging the material basis for black oppression—a substitute for the fight to win the working class to take up the struggle for black freedom. In doing so, they ceded the terrain to the reformist black misleaders and the labor lieutenants of capital, the trade-union bureaucracy.

The genuine radicalism and personal courage of many Panthers were combined with illusions in the reformability of the racist capitalist system. One example is the 1970 Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention, a meeting in Philadelphia called to bring together a variety of left organizations and activists to adopt a "constitution that serves the people, not the ruling class." Jamal attributes its "failure" to the fact that white radicals weren't

Time

Frantz Fanon. His book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, had strong influence on Panther leaders.

prepared to make a revolution. Mumia asks: "Were millions of white youth, no matter what they claimed their political or ideological persuasions, really ready to embark on a revolution, one that did not prize whiteness?" This notion of white skin privilege, which was the common coin for the New Left's rejection of the American proletariat as a revolutionary factor, wears pretty thin after 25 years of attacks on the living standards of all workers in the U.S., ushered in by the firing of the entire PATCO air traffic controllers union in 1981, and exemplified by the imprisonment of steel worker Bob Buck and coal miner Jerry Dale Lowe.

The Panthers' ten-point program of mildly liberal reforms called on the government for reparations, wanted the educational system to teach the "true history" of black and oppressed people in this country, and expressed the Panthers' illusions in the United Nations den of imperialist thieves and their victims. Just a few years after the UN's well-known dirty role in the assassination of Congo nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba, the Panthers' program called for a UN-supervised plebiscite for black people to determine "their national destiny." The Panthers also called for an end to police brutality and petitioned for community control of the police, combining liberal illusions over the nature of the bourgeois state with black nationalist illusions that the oppression of black people can be ended through "control" of ghetto institutions.

Even if it could be accomplished, black "control" of the impoverished ghettos could not put an end to the endemic poverty, joblessness, crime, dilapidated housing, broken-down schools and drug addiction born of despair. This requires a massive reallocation of resources and wealth, which is only possible with the expropriation of the bloodsucking capitalist class as a whole and the creation of a workers state in which those who labor rule—a workers state where production is based on human need, not profits. This can only be accomplished through a socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist order and its state, which exists to defend the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. And only the multiracial working class has the power to do that. Based on its role in producing the wealth of this society, it is only the industrial proletariat which has both the social interest and power to bring down this rotten capitalist order.

The crackdown on the Panthers did not provoke mass ghetto rebellions, but a rapid lurch to the right. Isolated, with repression bearing down on them, the Panthers shifted their focus to legal defense work in an effort to gain the broadest possible support. The Panther alliances with white radicals were not motivated by the realization that American society could only be revolutionized by an integrated working-class movement, but because they sought support for their defense campaign. In 1968 Eldridge Cleaver ran for president on the liberal Peace and Freedom Party ticket. A key role in the rightward degeneration and demise of the BPP was played by the cynical operators of the Communist Party (CP). Beginning in 1969, the CP influenced the Panther leadership in launching a "united front against fascism," an attempt to create an alliance of everyone to the left of the Nixon-Agnew administration on an essentially civil libertarian basis. A few years later, Newton & Co. were talking about the relevance of the black church and black capitalism. In 1973 Bobby Seale ran for mayor as a Democrat and in 1976 Newton joined the NAACP.

WV Photo

Philadelphia, 14 July 1990: PDC-initiated united-front rally in defense of Jamal.

In 1971 the Panthers suffered a split between the more overtly reformist, pro-Democratic majority Newton wing and the urban guerrilla warfare Cleaver wing—a split characterized by murderous internal factionalism, and inflamed by COINTELPRO provocations. Both of the factions sent their supporters onto the streets to murder each other. Jamal's book cites Panthers who went underground for safety not just from the state, but from other Panthers.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party to Fight for a Workers Government!

Though the Panthers self-consciously fashioned themselves as a vanguard party, they were not. The Panthers were New Left sectoralists. Their program was that blacks would liberate blacks, Hispanics would liberate Hispanics, and so on. As opposed to sectoralism, which is a strategy for dividing the ranks of the future proletarian army fighting for state power, a Leninist vanguard party is a tribune of the people, which fights against all aspects of social oppression on the basis of an internationalist revolutionary program.

Jamal describes the Panthers as a woman's party, and gives compelling portraits of women who played leading roles and were the key to running the party in various capacities in spite of the obstacles in their way. However, just because Newton issued a proclamation of the necessity for women's and gay liberation didn't mean that the Black Panther Party was a tribune of the people. The Panthers were heavily influenced by lumpen ideology. Some women chose to leave the Panthers because the male chauvinism was suffocating. This is not to deny the heroic role played by women who chose to remain in the ranks of the Panthers and function as leaders no matter what.

It is impossible to have a program for the liberation of women divorced from a proletarian revolutionary program to abolish the roots of women's oppression: the system of private property in the means of production. The Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky were intransigent fighters for women's liberation as an indispensable part of the fight for the emancipation of the working class from exploitation. The material basis of women's oppression lies in the institution of the family. Without an energetic and implacable struggle for women's equality the proletarian struggle against the rule of capital cannot succeed.

With their military posturings, the Panthers were easy pickings for the mass murderers of U.S. imperialism. You cannot build a revolutionary party on the basis of hero-worship and glorification of a street-gang mentality. It is tragic that the Panthers were destroyed by bloody state repression, and there was no revolutionary party sizable enough to win the best of these radical black youth. We tried. In the late '60s and early '70s the Panthers were so sacrosanct in radical circles that any criticism of them was met with shrill accusations of racism. In the face of the widespread hero-worship of Newton, Eldridge Cleaver and other leaders, the Spartacist League polemicized against the Panthers' notion of lumpen vanguardism and argued that black nationalism, even in its most radical form, was a utopian dead end. We also denounced the physical gangsterism against other leftists and challenged the BPP's rightward plunge into the Democratic Party. In an "Open Letter to the Ranks of the Black Panther Party on the Oakland Elections" (*WV* No. 18, April 1973), we wrote that we could not give electoral critical support to the Panthers, asking, "How is it that your party, which once claimed to seek a revolutionary transformation of society, can now support candidates who are members of the Democratic Party—the party of war, racism and repression—and run as Democrats yourselves?" We offered that if the BPP broke with both the parties of capital and its own policies of class collaboration we could offer critical support for their election campaign: "We hope that you comrades will recognize the disastrous right turn of the Black Panther Party and will struggle to replace the present BPP line of support for black Democrats, black churches, black cops and black capitalists with a revolutionary working-class perspective."

Despite our political differences, we defended the Panthers against state repression—including after their left cheerleaders had long jumped ship—and we continue to do so today. The Partisan Defense Committee provides monthly stipends to Mondo we Langa, Ed Poindexter and Mumia, for whom we have waged a 17-year campaign for his life and freedom, producing pamphlets and a video and introducing his case to unions around the world. We seek to build the revolutionary party that will lead the working class to power through smashing this decrepit, racist capitalist system. In an American workers state, *We Want Freedom* will be given the highest honor in the people's libraries and classrooms. Read this book. ■

Spartacist League Forum

Those Who Labor Must Rule!

We Need a Fighting Workers Party!

Break with the Democrats! No Vote to Nader!

Saturday, October 23, 2 p.m.

322 W. 48th St., 1st floor
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NEW YORK CITY

Indymedia...

(continued from page 1)

Pennsylvania successfully opposed an application by Diebold Election Systems Inc to remove documents claiming to reveal flaws in the design of electronic voting machines which are due to be used widely in the forthcoming US Presidential election." Diebold, like other companies providing electronic balloting, has close links to the Republican Party. The *New York Times* (8 October) reported that some Indymedia members think the seizure "might be related to recent requests by the FBI asking that the site remove photos posted by IMC's Nantes affiliate, purportedly depicting Swiss undercover police" during the 2003 G-8 Summit protests in Geneva.

Whatever the pretext for this raid, it is clear that the U.S. rulers would like to wipe out political dissent. For example, Sherman Austin (recently released to a halfway house) was convicted in 2003 under a 1997 "anti-terrorism" law just for hosting an anarchist Web site on which publicly available information was posted. Activists and others have been banned from flying or even entering the country. The U.S. even barred former pop singer Cat Stevens (who converted to Islam and changed his name to Yusuf Islam) from the U.S. on "national security grounds"!

The U.S. capitalist rulers are also bent on swatting out of their way any obstacles to their continued sway—like journalists who might expose inconvenient or damning truths. The FCC (Federal Communications Commission) in September launched a series of raids on small "alternative" community radio stations across the country, among them "Free Radio Santa Cruz," which had operated freely without a license for nearly ten years. On September 29 two dozen federal agents with automatic weapons and riot gear seized the station's antenna and equipment from its base in a student housing co-op, ironically just as it finished its regular broadcast of "Democracy Now!" Even reporters for the respectable *New York Times* are targeted: Judith Miller now faces 18 months in jail for refusing to "name names" of her sources to a federal prosecutor investigating the exposure of a CIA agent—even though she never published an article on the subject!

In this era of "war on terror" repression against political dissent, free speech and other rights are being attacked, including on an expanding electronic battlefield. The Feds were thwarted two times recently in going after Internet sources of information. Before the Republican National Convention, the Secret Service tried to get Indymedia to turn over contact information, a blatant attempt to intimidate people planning to protest at the convention. That attempt was beaten back successfully, as was a previous attempt in 2001. On September 29 the American Civil Liberties Union won an important victory for Internet privacy when a federal appeals court overturned a key part of the Patriot Act. The court barred the Justice Department from issuing "National Security Letters" to Internet service providers. These letters authorized the government seizure of financial information and communications information on citizens without the constitutional requirement of a search warrant issued by a judge upon probable cause a crime has been committed. The law's provision also prohibited its victims from revealing to anyone they were the recipients of such government demands.

Now the U.S. government has struck again in London. It's a well-known cliché that truth is the first casualty in war. Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said in Baghdad, "We don't target journalists," as two journalists were killed by U.S. forces firing at the Palestine Hotel and an Al-Jazeera TV reporter died in a U.S. air strike in the early days of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. From the front lines of war to the back offices disseminating uncensored information, we stand in fullest solidarity with those courageous journalists who struggle to tell the truth against the repression and lies of the American imperialists.■

Casino Strike...

(continued from page 12)

of Pacific Avenue, scabs were being bused in, deliveries were being made, and construction workers doing work on hotels were on the job. And Atlantic City's core business of sucking up money on the dark, glittering gaming floors continues, as slot attendants and dealers, not in Local 54, have stayed on the job. Key to union power is industrial organizing, getting *every* single casino worker into the union, so the hotel casinos are organized top to bottom!

Across the street from the picketing strikers, huge slabs of prefabricated concrete were being delivered as construction at Caesars' new "transportation center" and the Tropicana went on. A striking cook at the Tropicana said of the company's planned new "Quarter": "I work in the buffet and they say this could be a nonunion buffet" (*New York Times*, 1 October). Striking cocktail servers told *WV* that construction workers had said they would honor pickets at their work site, but a judge banned pickets from crossing the street. Construction workers themselves have bitter reason to distrust the casino bosses. In 2003, four workers were killed and 21 injured when a Tropicana garage under construction collapsed. The Tropicana had been fined previously for a collapsing walkway, but as a laborer told the Associated Press in 2003, "They're always trying to rush the job to stay ahead because the bad weather's coming."

The union should be calling on other labor unions to ***shut down*** the casinos. Instead, on October 8 they held a "civil disobedience" action, where some 80 unionists sat in the street, got themselves briefly arrested and paid "disorderly conduct" tickets. Meanwhile, they make legalistic appeals on picket restrictions to the bosses' courts, where the deck is stacked against the working class. The Teamsters have plenty of power; so do the construction workers—and so do the 10,000 striking workers in Atlantic City's major industry, if they really use it. Casino business is obviously booming, as the projected mega-mergers and new "cashless" slot technology drive investment by the really big gamblers in the Wall Street stock market.

On October 4, *WV* reporters saw a big white Teamster "Command Center" pull up to Local 54 strikers. But instead of Teamster reinforcement pickets coming to shut the place down, what emerged was Democratic Party politician Richard Gephardt, a groomed pink-and-blonde former presidential candidate ready for his "photo op" on the line. So they took the photo and the Teamsters pulled out. And the little clusters of pickets were left banging their sticks and watching everybody else go to work as usual.

Democratic Party politicians will not help workers fight for our real interests because they are a capitalist party, committed to maintenance of the capitalist system of exploitation of labor. Relying on these lying "friends of labor" is a losing strategy. Workers can *win* this strike, if they use their own independent strength to shut the casinos down, and if they are backed up by their union brothers and sisters in the Teamsters, on the construction sites, and in the transport unions who drive in many customers. You don't really need to be a gambler to see how favorable those odds could be on the streets of Atlantic City during this strike.■

Hotel Workers...

(continued from page 4)

> course they have. After all, their job is to guard the security of the bosses' property against the workers! We say, throw the cops and security guards out of the unions! They're not part of the working class."

Security guards protect the bosses' property. The cops enforce the bosses' laws. The bosses use both to ***break*** strikes.

SYCer Redondo spoke of the power of the working class to change the world:

> "Anyone who opposes the injustices of this decaying imperialist society, from the brutal colonial occupation in Iraq to the intense racism and state repression at home, should side with the working class, which actually has the power to change society. The working class, because it is organized at the point of production, has the power to shut down the capitalist system by going on strike. Right now the class line is clearly drawn."

In San Francisco, hotel workers have real social power due to the strategic importance of tourism to the city's economy. Tourism brings in over $6 billion a year—$3.4 billion in hotel revenue, translating into nearly $139 million in city revenue brought in by the city's hotel room tax in 2003.

But to win this strike, the union will have to flex its own muscles and will need the solid adherence of other organized workers at all levels of hotel operations and, crucially, will have to enforce the basic trade-union principle of ***picket lines mean don't cross***. No one should work in or patronize the struck hotels. We talked to a CCSF student who's also a member of UNITE HERE Local 2, who expressed frustration at how the strike is going, saying that many workers no longer want to be on strike. We talked to him about how a winning strategy would involve stopping the scab operation and ***shutting down the hotels***. Already Teamsters Local 665 president Mark Gleason has vowed that "All Teamster deliveries [to the hotels] are going to stop" (ABC7news.com, 1 October). On the other hand, picket captains told us that despite official assertions that they are honoring the strike, Operating Engineers Local 39 has been crossing the picket line by keeping minimum staff on site, thereby capitulating to legal requirements rather than staying out in solidarity, which would pose the possibility of the hotels being shut down for violations of safety regulations. This reveals their leadership's unwillingness to really confront the hotel owners and city government.

Break with the Democrats!

The hotel owners have expressed their own class solidarity by locking out thousands of workers, declaring that "a strike against one hotel is a strike against all." To win this strike, workers need to show class unity and stick together—which means fighting against the union leaders' program of relying on Democratic Party politicians to act as "friends of labor" in negotiating with the hotel owners.

Workers in San Francisco may not have too much confidence in Democratic mayor Gavin Newsom, who is after all a wealthy restaurateur with ties to the local hotel owners. But there are widespread illusions in the "progressive" Democratic politicians, such as SF Supervisors Tom Ammiano or Aaron Peskin, who are among the eight supervisors (out of eleven) who publicly profess to "support" the strike. Peskin himself revealed his true class allegiance by instructing neighbors of the picketed hotels in posh Noh Hill to sic the cops on the supposedly "noisy and raucous" strikers. He soon got his wish; the SFPD threatened to fine picket captains $180 if they continued to allow picketers to disturb the delicate ears of the rich (*SF Examiner*, 7 October). Meanwhile, UNITE HERE Local 2 president Mike Casey spoke at a rally with Democratic lieutenant governor Cruz Bustamante at the Fairmont Hotel, pledging to return to work on October 13, with or without a new contract. This despite the bosses' threat that they will lock out all workers after the strike is over if the union doesn't accept their ultimatums.

As the LBL's Jido Cooper put it, "Why are the labor leaders' ties to the Democrats a problem? It's that the Democrats are a capitalist party. A party of the class enemy which protects and promotes the prerogatives and profits of the American capitalist class. You can't wage an all-out fight against the bosses and stand up against their state if you're in bed with their political representatives." He continued, "What labor needs is a new class-struggle union leadership. What we need is a revolutionary workers party to lead the struggle for a workers state which can place the wealth of this country at the disposal of the international working class."

By intervening in real class struggle, like this strike in San Francisco, the SYC fights to win students and young workers to the perspective that the only way out of capitalist immiseration is through a socialist revolution. Join us in support of the striking workers and in protest of the bosses' lockout! ***Victory to the hotel workers strike!***■

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Gaza...

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imperialist-inspired "peace plans" since, far from opening up any vista of liberation for the Palestinians, have served only to deepen their subjugation under the Zionist jackboot.

Down With the U.S. Occupation of Iraq!

As their Israeli junior partners carry out a murderous assault on the population of Gaza, the U.S. imperialists, assisted by their puppet Iraqi army, storm and bomb cities and regions across Iraq. Najaf has been pummeled; it is now described as largely in ruins. U.S. forces have also been carrying out virtually nightly bombing raids in Falluja, home to about 350,000 people. The U.S. forces have retaken Samarra, a city of about 250,000 people north of Baghdad, killing at least 150 people and wounding unknown numbers.

With this military offensive, the Bush administration is clearly intent on displaying, not least to the American populace which will be casting votes for president in less than a month, that Iraq is under control and striding toward "democratic" elections in January. But as one resident of Samarra, whose wife and two children were killed by the U.S. invaders, said bitterly: "I've lost my entire family. Why should I trust this government? Why should I vote at all?" (*New York Times*, 11 October).

Bush's glib assurances to the contrary, nothing can conceal the fact that Iraq is on fire, and that the U.S. offensive is only throwing oil on the flames. Each area "stabilized" by the U.S. has insurgent counterparts in cities and towns across the country, and can itself re-erupt in fighting at any time.

To the extent that the various Shi'ite and Sunni militias, which seem to be engaged in most of the fighting, aim their blows against the occupation, we take their side against U.S. imperialism. However, it must be understood that these mutually hostile clerical forces are deeply reactionary; are murderously opposed to women's rights and those of other peoples like the Kurds; and are utterly opposed to the most basic conception of human progress. Among the near-infinite crimes of U.S. imperialism must be added the fact that it has turned Iraq—the cradle of human civilization and a country that was until recently among the most secular in the Near East—into an inferno where women have been driven in fear back into their homes and nearly every day innocent citizens from various countries perish in suicide- or car-bombings or are beheaded in the name of god.

AFP

Israeli wall imprisons Palestinians, dividing families, separating farmers from their land and cutting off population from jobs, hospitals, schools, fresh water.

In desperation over the absence of any class struggle against the imperialist occupation—either in Iraq or in the U.S.—some look to the "Iraqi resistance" as the only way to drive out the U.S. imperialists. Such illusions are reinforced by a host of reformist left groups in the U.S. and Europe, who prettify the Sunni and Shi'ite religious gangs as "anti-imperialist." In fact, as we have warned: "In the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism" (*WV* No. 830, 6 August). Typically, Shi'ite leader Moktada al-Sadr, whose Mahdi Army has twice staged a rebellion against the occupation forces in Najaf, is now again dealing with the U.S. for a place in a future neocolonial puppet government.

Political support to the Islamist (or bourgeois nationalist) forces in Iraq is *counterposed* to the only real perspective for liberating Iraq and the rest of the Near East from the yoke of imperialist domination—socialist revolution. In neighboring Iran, for example, there is a young and powerful proletariat, chafing under the suffocating grip of a reactionary and increasingly discredited Islamic theocracy. A socialist revolution in Iran would be a direct blow for the emancipation of women and national and religious minorities in that prison house of peoples. It would also open up the possibility of a revolutionary transformation of the entire region, offering a vista of proletarian internationalism even to the seemingly intractable national divide in Israel/Palestine. But it is patently obvious that to mobilize the masses of Iran (or those of the Arab countries) on the road of social revolution requires an intransigent opposition to Islamic fundamentalism as well as Western imperialism. Leninist vanguard parties must be built in opposition to all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism.

As Iraq burns and Bush's Republican Party tries to prove that stability is gaining hold, the Democrats are working frantically to prove that their candidate, John Kerry, would better "finish the job" in Iraq. The Democrats and Republicans step up their sparring with each other every four years, each hoping to demonstrate that theirs is the party that will best represent the "American people." This year, notwithstanding the mostly leaden performance of the Kerry-Edwards campaign, there is more intense fervor than usual to defeat the Republicans, which is hardly surprising: the Bush cabal is a truly frightening administration that has antagonized the U.S.'s erstwhile imperialist allies through its god-invoking crusade in Iraq and created a lot of genuine loathing at home.

The fact is there is no significant difference in policy between these parties over Iraq—only a difference of opinion as to tactics. And when it comes to U.S. support to Zionist Israel, there aren't even tactical differences. Both Democrats and Republicans agree on the need for U.S. imperialist control over the Near East and its oil spigot.

More fundamentally, the U.S. is a class-divided society in which the interests of working people are counterposed to those of the capitalist rulers. The ruling class derives its fabulous wealth from the exploitation of the working people at home and imperialist plunder abroad. The capitalists have two major parties—the Democrats and Republicans—each committed to maintaining imperialism for them. We need a revolutionary workers party that fights to sweep away the imperialist system that breeds poverty, racism and war.

Oslo "Peace" Accord Paved Way to Ghetto

In the most immediate sense, the desperate situation the Palestinians face today is the result of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords brokered by U.S. Democratic president Clinton between Israel and Yasir Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In the years since, the number of settlers, many of them heavily armed ultra-Zionist fanatics, has doubled. The Palestinians have been partitioned into ghettos to which exit and entry is entirely controlled by Israeli troops: farmers are unable to reach their land, families are split apart and the population is cut off from jobs, hospitals, schools and even water.

Today, the entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by the "bypass

Letters...

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to oppose the AFL-CIO tops' protectionism to do so explicitly. The *WV* article made clear our intransigent opposition to protectionism, something Thomas did not do in his remarks. In the absence of any denunciation of protectionism, Thomas' complaints about the "outsourcing of our jobs" is an echo of the labor tops' protectionism—the concern raised about the exploitation of foreign workers serves as a left cover.

The question is: how should workers respond to the loss of their jobs? The capitalists will generally go where social conditions are most favorable for extracting profits, whether it's the "open shop" American South or India. Whatever measures the capitalists might agree to implement to restrict the movement of jobs outside the U.S. will not halt their ruthless pursuit of profit nor protect workers in the U.S. from unemployment and an increased rate of exploitation. In a 21 September interview posted on the MWM Web site, Silbar himself acknowledges that the demands of the MWM "are silent about how to defend workers."

The key to the defense of workers in the U.S. is international solidarity action to support the organizing of workers in foreign countries and their struggles to free themselves from imperialist subjugation. But you can't carry out this fight while joining hands with U.S. capitalists and lobbying for protectionist policies. If the MWM opposes the protectionism of the AFL-CIO tops, where are its denunciations of these policies? There are none, just as the MWM denounces Bush without repudiating Kerry.

The China Currency Coalition, a lash-up of the AFL-CIO and assorted employers associations, is currently waging an anti-Communist, protectionist campaign to pressure the imperialists in Washington to force the revaluation of Chinese currency. Their goal is to make Chinese exports more expensive in this country to bolster the sales of domestic American capitalists. This campaign just happens to coincide with Kerry's platform, as the chauvinist heads of the United Steelworkers of America eagerly trumpet on their Web site: "Kerry Joins Efforts to Block Flood of Cheap Chinese Imports." While the ILWU tops have in general distanced themselves from the most extreme anti-China fulminations of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the ILWU paper, the *Dispatcher* (December 1999), proudly displayed a picture of a Local 10 member helping dump mock "foreign" I-beams into Puget Sound as part of the anti-China "tea party" during the 1999 Seattle WTO protests.

All such protectionist appeals are reactionary, seeking to unite workers with their class enemies at home against their class brothers and sisters in other countries. In this case, they strike an additional blow against the interests of the international working class. The Chinese Revolution of 1949 overthrew capitalist rule, creating a workers state which, although deformed from birth by the rule of a Stalinist bureaucracy, removed the most populous nation on earth from the sphere of imperialist exploitation. Despite deep capitalist inroads fostered by the Chinese bureaucracy's "market reforms," the collectivized property and planned economy created by the revolution persist. The imperialist powers would like nothing better than to get their claws freely into China once again. Key to advancing the interests of the working class internationally is understanding the necessity for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state.

Silbar objects that the Spartacist League does not follow in the footsteps of Lenin or Karl Marx: "Marx spent years working to help inject and develop the class consciousness of active workers in his day." Indeed he did—and he did it through merciless critiques of the opportunists of his day. Almost everything that Marx and Lenin wrote was polemical, because the job of a revolutionary is to struggle to win the working class to the socialist program. And that's what we're about.■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

Boston
Box 390840, Centrat Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE OU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

roads" that are off-limits to Palestinians. The construction of a 600-mile-long wall completes the segregation of the Palestinian West Bank population, while placing large chunks of Palestinian land under Israeli control. Last month, the mayor of Jerusalem presented plans, praised by the Israeli interior ministry, to declare Wadi Joz, an Arab neighborhood in occupied East Jerusalem, as "zoned for Jewish population" (*Ha'aretz*, 24 September).

Palestinian unemployment is now two-thirds in some areas, and more than half the children are malnourished. Incomes have fallen by more than half to $900 a year—compared with an average of nearly $17,000 for Israelis. One of Sharon's cabinet ministers last year expressed the long-standing Zionist dream that through brutal suppression, the Palestinians will just get out: "Make their life so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly."

Today, the illusion of a negotiated settlement for a Palestinian state, or even the vague "autonomy" promised by Oslo, is dead and buried. Even Sharon's promise to withdraw Israeli troops and settlers from the tiny Gaza Strip is simply a cynical cover for all but formal annexation of much of the West Bank. One of Sharon's top advisers, Dov Weisglass, said recently: "What I effectively agreed to with the Americans was that part of the settlements would not be dealt with at all, and the rest will not be dealt with until the Palestinians turn into Finns.... Effectively, this whole package that is called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed from our agenda indefinitely. And all this with authority and permission. All with a [U.S.] presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress" (*Ha'aretz*, 8 October).

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

We defend the Palestinians in their just struggle against the Zionist occupation. However, as long as the conflict remains one of nation against nation, the Palestinians can only lose out to the far wealthier, heavily armed (including with nukes) and more technologically advanced Zionist state. This realization has led to growing despair among the Palestinian population. Particularly since Oslo, as Palestinians have increasingly come to see the PLO as politically bankrupt, increasing numbers, including youth and even women, are turning to the reactionary Islamic fundamentalist Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements. On the other hand, some Palestinian spokesmen are abandoning even talk of Palestinian self-determination. In an op-ed piece printed in the *New York Times* (4 October), PLO legal adviser Michael Tarazi wrote:

> "After years of negotiations, coupled with incessant building of settlements and now the construction of the wall, Palestinians finally understand that Israel is offering 'independence' on a reservation stripped of water and arable soil, economically dependent on Israel and even lacking the right to self-defense. As a result, many Palestinians are contemplating whether the quest for equal statehood should now be superseded by a struggle for equal citizenship. In other words, a one-state solution in which citizens of all faiths and ethnicities live together as equals."

Such is the logical outcome of the political bankruptcy of Palestinian nationalism. In 1964, the Palestinian National Covenant declared that only "Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians." Following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza, the PLO adopted the "democratic secular state" line—a Palestinian state in which Jews would presumably have equal rights. This was not only utopian; it also denied the ***national*** rights of the Hebrew population, treating them instead as a religious minority. Then in the mid 1970s, the PLO adopted the call for a "mini-state" in the Occupied Territories. In the early 1990s came Oslo, where Arafat's PLO and the Palestinian Authority would get to police isolated Palestinian cantons for Israel's rulers. Now Tarazi is renouncing the national rights of the Palestinians outright.

Tarazi is calling for what amounts to a "Greater Israel" in which the 3.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would join the "Israeli Arabs" who are currently third-class citizens of Israel. Tarazi paints this as a struggle for equality akin to the black struggle in South Africa and asserts, "The struggle against South African apartheid proves the battle can be won."

The fall of apartheid was an important victory for the oppressed black masses of South Africa, as it provided formal equality and the right to vote. But it is hardly liberation; what exists in South Africa today is neo-apartheid, where a black government lords it over the black population—whose standard of living has not changed in the last decade—for a tiny white capitalist class. But even that can never happen in Israel—no way will a predominantly Arab Palestinian government rule for a Zionist capitalist class. Similarities between South Africa and Israel/Palestine are purely superficial; the differences between them are far greater.

Tarazi writes that Israel "wants Palestinian land but not the Palestinians who live on that land." Despite the hideous injustices, oppression and subjugation suffered by the black masses in South Africa, the white rulers could not even conceive of driving them off the land because it would mean driving off their labor force: the enormously higher standard of living experienced by most of the white population was based on the super-exploitation of black labor. The opposite is the case in Israel/Palestine. From the beginning of their colonial enterprise, the Zionist rulers have made it a point not to rely on Arab labor, and to instead build up a Hebrew proletariat.

AFP

Jerusalem: Israeli workers demonstrate against Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during nationwide general strike in September.

For decades after the 1967 war, Israel used Palestinian laborers from the Occupied Territories for the most unskilled and lowest-paid work. But as noted in a compelling article in *New Left Review* (September-October 2004) by Tel Aviv University professor Yoav Peled: "With the outbreak of the first *intifada* in 1987, however, the economic benefits of the Occupation—a cheap and reliable labour force and captive market—began to be outweighed by its costs." The hundreds of thousands of Palestinian laborers who used to find work in Israel have for the most part been replaced by over 250,000 foreign workers imported into the country from Asia and East Europe. Whereas South African apartheid was premised on the exploitation of black labor by the white minority, the Zionist state was founded on the ***expulsion*** of the Palestinians, ***not*** the exploitation of their labor.

The Palestinian nationalists have tried nearly everything to beat back the Israeli garrison state: from fighting to negotiating to appealing to the UN and Western imperialists, to now pathetically begging to simply be allowed to exist—and it has all been and will all be futile. So long as the national axis is emphasized, the situation will always be bleak and hopeless. But if the *class* axis is emphasized, there is at least a *realistic* chance at an equitable resolution.

Like all capitalist societies, Israel is divided along class lines and rent by political fissures: the same ruling class that sends tanks into Gaza also sends out its police to attack Israeli strikers and political demonstrators; court-martials the growing numbers of young people in the draft army who are refusing to serve in the Occupied Territories; and shoots Israeli youth who protest the building of the wall.

The Peled article makes vividly clear that the Israeli bourgeoisie's war against the Palestinians is being carried out simultaneously with a war against the Hebrew working class. A powerful nationwide general strike on September 21—the third general strike since April 2003—paralyzed the country for 30 hours as the Histadrut, Israel's labor federation, demanded payment for municipal workers, many of them Arab, who had not been paid for months. On October 1 Arabs called a strike to commemorate the police massacre of 13 people in an Arab village in Israel during the protests that erupted in October 2000 in solidarity with the uprising in the Occupied Territories. And now another general strike is posed, as many workers are still not paid their wages.

It is the task of socialists in the Near East to use every fissure, every strike, every opportunity to widen the gap between Israel's workers and rulers, to convince the Israeli proletariat that it is in its interests to defend the Palestinians and to oppose the Zionist ruling class. We have no illusions that this will be an easy task; it will likely take some historic event, like the victory of social revolution in another country in the Near East extending a hand of proletarian internationalism to the Israeli working class, to jolt the Hebrew proletariat from its ties with the Zionist rulers. Indeed, the Israeli proletariat is largely made up of Sephardic (Near Eastern and North African) Jews who are on the one hand treated as second-class citizens while on the other expressing the most chauvinist attitudes toward Palestinian Arabs. But to write off the Israeli working class as potential allies of the struggle for Palestinian national rights is to write off the struggle for Palestinian national rights.

National self-determination for the Palestinian people—who also constitute the majority of Jordan's population—cannot be resolved within the borders of Israel/Palestine. Nor can there be justice for the Palestinians within the framework of capitalist rule. On the contrary, the system of private property and private ownership of the means of production necessarily contains within it the components of nationalism and religion, which make impossible the settlement of the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew populations. Only through a socialist federation of the Near East can the right of national self-determination for these peoples and the many other peoples of the region—including the Kurds, the largest nation without a state—be equitably realized. This necessarily calls for the leadership of internationalist Marxist workers parties, sections of a reforged Fourth International. There is no other way. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Free Mumia! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

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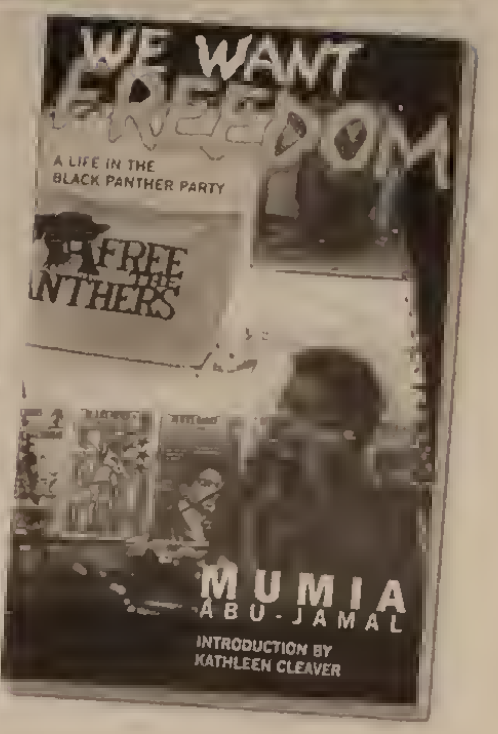
WE WANT FREEDOM

A Life in the Black Panther Party

A Book by Mumia Abu-Jamal



A Review by Paul Cone

"FOR ME, POLITICAL life began with the Black Panther Party.

"When an older sister named Audrea handed me a copy of *The Black Panther* newspaper around the spring of 1968 my mind was promptly blown. It was as if my dreams had awakened and strolled into my reality.

"I read and reread the issue, tenderly fingering each page as if it were the onion-skinned, tissue-like leaf of a holy book. My eyes drank in the images of young Black men and women, their slim and splendid bodies clothed in black leather, their breasts bedecked with buttons proclaiming rebellion, resistance, and revolution.

"I almost couldn't believe my eyes as I scanned photos of armed Black folks proclaiming their determination to fight or die for the Black Revolution.

"It would be some months before I would formally join something called the Black Panther Party, but, in truth, I joined it months before, when I saw my first *Black Panther* newspaper.

"I joined it in my heart.

"I was all of fourteen years old."

We Want Freedom is a firsthand account of life in the Black Panther Party (BPP) by death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The story Jamal tells is that of the Panthers' foot soldiers, the very young men and women, like himself, who devoted their lives to the cause of revolutionary struggle against black oppression. Jamal dedicates this book in part "To those young idealistic souls who wore the black and the blue. To those who sold papers in the dead of night, in smoky bars, and in the freezing grips of the wind (especially in the East). To those loving women and sensitive men who rose from their beds at five a.m. to prepare hot breakfasts for schoolchildren from coast to coast."

Jamal's book captures the finest qualities that are embodied in militant fighters for the oppressed and exploited. Mumia recalls:

"The days were long.

"The risks were substantial.

"The rewards were few.

"Yet the freedom was hypnotic. We could think freely, write freely, and act freely in the world.

"We knew that we were working for our people's freedom, and we loved it.

"It was the one place in the world that it seemed right to be."

Thanks to this book, the many young black men and women whom the FBI warned about "succumbing to revolutionary teachings" are no longer "nameless" and "faceless" as the racist exploiters have tried to make them.

We Want Freedom tells the story of the Black Panther Party's origins and subsequent destruction less than a decade later through the vicious COINTELPRO (Counter-Intelligence Program) campaign, inflamed by internal factionalism. Jamal gives personal reminiscences of the Philadelphia chapter, of which he was a founding member and Lieutenant of Information. Jamal describes with pride and passion the free breakfast and other community programs with which the Panthers sought to "serve the people." He tells of how the Black Panthers defied the racist rulers by expressing solidarity with the Vietnamese and Cuban Revolutions, including their bold offer to send troops to fight alongside the Vietnamese against bloody U.S. imperialism.

Most compelling in this powerful book are Jamal's accounts of the young men and especially women, born of poverty in the hellish American ghettos, who joined the fight for black freedom. There was Regina Jennings, a drug-addicted 16-year-old who after hopping a plane in Philadelphia stormed into the Oakland office demanding to join the party—which took her in a few days later, when she was sober, and helped her kick her habit. Jamal quotes Naima Major, who as a 17-year-old National Negro Scholar shunned college to travel to Oakland to join the Panthers. "Devoted to the black revolution and the ten point program, I commenced with baby in sling to doing the hard community work required of all Panthers, organizing poor women like myself, planning and supporting free schools, writing letters for people who couldn't write, demanding decent housing for people who were afraid of the landlord, helping get the newspaper out,

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Victory to Casino Hotel Workers Strike!

Atlantic City

OCTOBER 12—Over 10,000 casino hotel workers in Local 54 of UNITE HERE went on strike on October 1 against 7 of 12 Atlantic City casinos: Caesars, Harrah's, Bally's (which includes the Claridge), Showboat, Resorts, the Hilton and the Tropicana. The Trump casinos settled before the strike, the Borgata signed a contract last year, and the Sands agreed to abide by the first contract reached. Local 54 is fighting for a three-year contract, to expire simultaneously with contracts in Las Vegas and Detroit. This would give casino hotel workers enormous negotiating strength against the powerful gaming industry bosses, a move which a Harrah's spokesman charged was "unacceptable"—even as his own company does a mega-merger with Caesars! The union is also fighting to retain health benefits and, importantly, to ensure that union labor will be used in new expansions and leased, subcontracted or sold facilities.

On October 4, *Workers Vanguard* reporters went to the picket lines in Atlantic City. Striking workers beat drums and sticks as cars along Pacific Avenue honked in support and passengers waved Local 54 signs reading "On Strike" and "No Contract! No Peace!" On the sunny boardwalk, over 40 pickets in front of Bally's sang *Saturday Night Fever*'s "Staying Alive." Workers told *WV* that the strike is having an effect, as some guests ate off plastic plates, rooms got dirtier, and some restaurants cut back to basic buffets.

But there is also concern on the picket lines. Behind the pastel oceanfront facades, in the shadows

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WV Photo

UNITE HERE picket line in front of Bally's Casino, October 4.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 835 | GOU C-701 | 29 October 2004

Scull/Newsweek

Elections 2004
Religion, Racism and Reaction

AP

Break with the Democrats!
We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The Bush cabal that occupies the White House is fanatical, arrogant and believes it is doing the work of God. One would think the U.S. were some kind of theocratic state given all the heavy emphasis on religion. Newspaper articles detail how God supposedly told evangelist Pat Robertson that the Iraq war would entail heavy casualties. Bush supporters testify that they believe that through Bush, "God is in the White House." There is an open disdain for facts and reality. A *New York Times Magazine* (17 October) article by Ron Suskind describes how a senior Bush advisor told Suskind that "guys like me were 'in what we call the reality-based community,' which he defined as people who 'believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.' I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. 'That's not the way the world really works anymore'."

Suskind points out that Bush does not have to claim that he is ordained by God; others do it for him. He quotes zealous Bush supporter Hardy Billington declaring, "God gave us this president to be the man to protect the nation at this time."

"We may be that generation that sees Armageddon," Ronald Reagan infamously remarked. Though Reagan was probably thinking of a nuclear showdown with the Soviet Union, today many religious fundamentalist leaders are predicating their positions on the Near East, particularly Israel/Palestine, on a desire for an apocalyptic battle of titanic proportions in the region. This has led to an unholy alliance between the Zionist neocons and the largely Protestant fundamentalist right in the U.S. The two groups have drawn together in spite of the anti-Semitism of the bible-thumpers—Pat Robertson, for example, an ardent supporter of Israel, assigns Jews a role in his imagined conspiracy spelled out in his book *The New World Order* that reminds one of the lies in the anti-Semitic screed *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Rick Kopstein

Tiernan/Newsday

New York City: Local 1199 SEIU home health aides strike rally in June, demanding better wages and health coverage (top). Some 2,000 people march across Brooklyn Bridge in May in support of legalizing gay marriage.

These Christian fundamentalists *want* to see Armageddon, even if it means nuclear war in the Near East; they *want* to see the "Second Coming" and the end of the world. And they know to play on the deep religiosity that pervades this country, where, according to a recent Gallup Poll, some 42 percent of Americans describe themselves as "born again" or evangelical Christians. It is not an accident that gay marriage is blown up into some huge supposed threat to civilization as we know it, pushing the ever-popular hot buttons of American religious mania and sexual hysteria.

The fanatical religiosity of the Bush administration, its war-crazed policies, its supreme imperial arrogance and its attacks on the rights of labor and black people have produced a sharp polarization in this country. "When it comes to policy," the *New York Times* (26 October) noted, Bush "has done more than any president in recent history to advance the agenda of Christian social conservatives. On domestic issues, he has opposed same-sex marriage, favored restrictions on abortion and imposed limits on embryonic stem cell research. He has promoted vouchers for religious schools and shifted money for sex education and reproductive health programs to those that instead promote abstinence." The Bush administration is certainly a pack of crazed woman-hating, anti-black, anti-gay bigots.

It is understandable that many would see Kerry as some kind of "lesser evil" to the Bush gang—it's not so much that people are voting for Kerry but that they're voting against Bush. But from the standpoint of the interests of the working class, black people and the oppressed, the capitalist Democratic Party of John Forbes Kerry (who if elected will be the third-richest president in history) is no alternative. Kerry just wants to *better* and more rationally (for the capitalists) administer American imperialism abroad and repression at home to further the exploitation of working people for capitalist profit. Although basing their electoral support on different sectors of the population—which can often be very hostile to each other—both Republicans and Democrats at bottom are, as Gore Vidal puts it, "two right wings" of one party, the "Property Party."

Kerry wants to "win" in Iraq, projecting that troops may stay four more years. He supports Israel's concentration-camp walls going up around Palestinian communities. He wants to wage a more effective "war on terror" at home, which would mean more repression of immigrants, black people and labor. And, whatever his personal beliefs, he has not shied away from pandering to the religious vote. The *New York Times* (25 October) notes: "Mr. Kerry demonstrated a wide liturgical reach, quoting from Matthew, James, John, Luke, the Ten Commandments and 'Amazing Grace' before recalling for cheering Jews in Boca Raton how he once shouted 'the Israeli people lives' in Hebrew atop Masada."

It is a measure of how loathsome the Bush regime is that Kerry—a man who voted for the war in Iraq, a man who wants to increase American troop strength by 40,000 men, a man who voted for the USA-Patriot Act—is seen as an alternative. The problem, though, is fundamentally not one of individual candidates but

continued on page 10

Bush and Hitler?

27 September 2004

WV,

Do me a little favor. Come up with an article, analysis, on just why the coming presidential election is *not* like the election in Germany which ended in Hitler's victory, *not* analogous.

Cuz damn near every "anybody but Bush" person I talk to is convinced it *is* analogous, like the Democratic Party *is* analogous to the German Social Democrats of that time, with that German CP refusing (by Stalin's orders) to bloc with the Social Democrats, even calling 'em social fascists, as they today call or imply Bush as fascist.

So get on with that article, critique! I'll then fling it in the faces of those "anybody but Bush" folk, those having a helluva time making *distinctions*, like between current USA and Germany of '32.

And just now recalling—ya *did* go into this *seeming* analogy a few years back, though in just a sentence or two. This time make it—okay?—a *full-length* writeup.

S.C.

***WV* Replies:**

Bad as he is, George W. Bush is not the harbinger of American fascism. Fascism is a mobilization—not in the halls of Congress but in the streets—of the crazed petty bourgeoisie and lumpen-proletariat, whipped into a frenzy to physically destroy the mass organizations of the working class. Normally, the bourgeoisie keeps the fascists in reserve as a last resort, but it turns to them when the repressive organs of the state are incapable of containing explosive class conflict in periods of capitalist crisis. In this country, the face of fascism is seen in the Ku Klux Klan, the white-supremacist militias and their ilk.

The Spartacist League has a long history of organizing working-class-centered mobilizations against the fascists where and when they have raised their head. And at every step, we have had to mobilize *against* sabotage by the capitalist Democratic Party and its supporters on the left. In New York City, where we initiated a mobilization on 23 October 1999 against the KKK that brought out thousands of people, Al Sharpton and other Democratic politicians filed court papers seeking to allow the Klan to mobilize for race-terror in the name of defending their right to "free speech."

In our response to a similar letter from S.C. about a year ago, printed in *WV* No. 816 (26 December 2003), we wrote:

> "Contrary to what S.C. implies, the Republican Party is not a fascist party; nor is the capitalist Democratic Party, unlike the German Social Democratic Party, part of the workers movement. Moreover, Trotsky's point in Germany was not *electoral support* to the Social Democrats, which implies an endorsement of their political program. He argued for a fighting united front—a series of *actions*—between Communist and Social Democratic workers organizations to defeat the fascists, in the course of which the Communists could make clear to the Social Democratic ranks that only the Communists had the program that could make the necessary socialist revolution."

The fight against the fascists is not a matter that can be addressed through elections; it requires the independent mobilization of the power of the working class and all the oppressed. This was made crystal clear in the 1932 elections in Germany that S.C. refers to. In the various elections that took place that year, the Nazis never came close to winning a majority. But the powerful German proletariat was disoriented and demobilized by the craven refusal of its leaders to mobilize to smash the fascists in the streets. In November 1932, the last "free" election in the Weimar Republic, the Communists and Social Democrats combined to poll almost 1.5 million votes more than the Nazis. However, the capitalist rulers, who called the shots, had decided that stability could not be achieved without bringing the Nazis into the government. In January 1933, President von Hindenburg appointed Hitler as chancellor, setting the stage for the Nazi *führer* to assume dictatorial powers two months later. Ironically, Hindenburg had been elected the previous year with the support of the Social Democrats, who touted him as a "lesser evil" against Hitler.

Indymedia

Antiwar protest in San Francisco, January 2003.

The Bush administration has undeniably been exceptional in the extent to which it has succeeded in shredding bourgeois-democratic rights and rolling back gains of the working class and all the oppressed. But the fact is that this regime's assaults on democratic freedoms, and its "war without end" against "terrorism," have been carried out within the framework of ***bourgeois democracy***. The way to fight the continued evisceration of such rights was demonstrated in Oakland on 9 February 2002, when the Partisan Defense Committee and the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense initiated a united-front protest against the USA-Patriot and Maritime Security Acts. This demonstration brought together the struggles of immigrants, blacks and organized labor in opposition to the government's anti-immigrant hysteria. Meanwhile, the same Democratic pols who sought to undercut working-class mobilization against the fascists in the streets of NYC in 1999 lifted not a finger as political dissent was criminalized during the Republican National Convention this summer. Working people are betrayed by those who retail the lie that democratic rights can be defended by voting for the Democrats, the party which, in the aftermath of September 11, voted overwhelmingly for the USA-Patriot Act. John Kerry has promised that he will "finish the job" in Iraq and that he will be more aggressive than Bush in pursuing the "war against terror," which we have repeatedly pointed out is in reality a war against workers, blacks and immigrants.

The Bush gang has been so heavy-handed and provocative—not only against the oppressed in this country and against weak countries like Iraq but also against the European capitalist powers—that even a significant chunk of the ruling class in this country is ready for a change. But while Kerry talks about tinkering with Bush's tax cuts for the super-rich, he and his party are just as firmly committed to the rule of those same super-rich. This is why today we call to break with the capitalist parties and build a workers party to fight for a workers revolution, which alone can provide workers democracy. ■

TROTSKY

LENIN

For New October Revolutions!

November 7 (October 25 in the old Russian calendar) marks the 87th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. Despite its degeneration at the hands of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which ultimately resulted in capitalist restoration in 1991-92, the Bolshevik Revolution was a world-historic victory for working people and the oppressed internationally. We print below excerpts from an article by American Communist leader John Reed on Bolshevism, first printed in 1919 in Workers' World, *a newspaper aligned with Reed's Communist Labor Party.*

Bolshevism is the Social Revolution to which Socialists have looked forward for more than half a century. It is the inevitable struggle which must accompany the transition of society from Capitalism to Socialism. It is the final battle of the workers of the world for power to end forever the tyranny of class rule, and the misery of exploitation....

In Socialism the working class for the first time based its aspiration to freedom on scientific fact. Bolshevism is Socialism put into practice. Today the workers are becoming conscious of their power and ability to win the world for Labor. They always had the power, and sometimes the wish. But they lacked the will and the knowledge of the way. Bolshevism is the will and the way....

Bolshevism is practical. It does not assume that the capital class is going to be legislated out of power without a fight. Power is based on private ownership. In order to secure power the workers must control capitalist property, and abolish ownership. This they can only do by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat....

The Socialist Commonwealth is not born without fearful birth-pangs—the Proletarian Dictatorship. Russia today is not a Socialist Commonwealth—nor does it pretend to be. There is a Proletarian Dictatorship, engaged in conducting the final struggle of the working class against the capitalist class—not, however, its own capitalist class, for that has been conquered, but International Capitalism. Until International Capitalism is overthrown, Proletarian Dictatorship will not, cannot end....

Bolshevism is Socialism arrived at the point of social revolution—at the dictatorship of the proletariat foretold by Karl Marx.

—"John Reed on Bolshevism," *Workers' World*, 5 September 1919

WORKERS VANGUARD

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The closing date for news in this issue is 26 October

No. 835 **29 October 2004**

Come to the Courthouse! Defend Lynne Stewart!

This week, leftist attorney Lynne Stewart takes the stand in her own defense against the government's sinister terrorism smear, which could send her to prison for up to 40 years. We urge our readers to help pack the courthouse in a show of solidarity with Lynne Stewart and her co-defendants Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar. The trial resumed at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, October 25, in United States District Court, 40 Foley Square in New York City, courtroom 110.

AP

As the attorney for sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, a reactionary Egyptian cleric imprisoned for life on charges stemming from the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, Lynne Stewart, and her co-defendants, are themselves now charged with aiding and abetting terrorism. In the permanent shadow of the heinous 2001 destruction of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan, the prosecution has outrageously been allowed to present even Osama bin Laden as a "witness," showing the jury old videotapes of bin Laden which have nothing to do with Stewart, Yousry or Sattar, yet tar them, by lyingly implied association, as "terrorists."

The prosecution of Lynne Stewart, her translator and her paralegal is a frame-up that threatens everyone. If attorneys can't provide legal defense for the accused without being accused of the crimes themselves, then everyone's right to legal defense from government prosecution is threatened. *Workers Vanguard* has covered this case and its broader implications (see *WV* No. 829, 9 July for our latest article) and will cover Stewart's defense in upcoming issues of the paper. Come to the courthouse! Make a donation to the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 350 Broadway, Suite 700, New York, NY 10013.

25 Years After

Greensboro Massacre: We Will Not Forget!

Greensboro Daily News

1979: Five supporters of the Communist Workers Party, including union organizers, were shot and killed by Klan and Nazi terrorists, abetted by cops and Feds.

On 3 November 1979, in broad daylight, nine carloads of Klansmen and Nazis drove up to a black housing project in Greensboro, North Carolina, where an anti-Klan rally was gathering. With cool deliberation, the killers took out their weapons, aimed, fired and drove off. Five union officials and organizers and civil rights activists—supporters of the Communist Workers Party—lay dying in pools of blood. Ten others were wounded or maimed for life. The Greensboro Massacre was the bloodiest fascist attack in the U.S. in decades.

Greensboro was a conspiracy of the fascists and their capitalist state patrons. From the outset, the fascists were aided and abetted by the government, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent who helped train the killers and plot the assassinations, to the "former" FBI informer who rode shotgun in the motorcade of death and the Greensboro cop who brought up the rear. When the two-minute fusillade ended, the cops moved in to arrest the survivors for "rioting."

Signe Waller, widow of Greensboro martyr Jim Waller, recounted, "The FBI had men going around the textile mills and showing people pictures, asking for their identification. Many of the pictures were of people who were later killed in the Greensboro Massacre, and one of them was Jim's" (*The Carolinian Online*, 18 October). Two successive all-white juries acquitted the killers of all charges, affirming once again the meaning of "justice" in this racist capitalist country.

Carried out during the Democratic Carter administration, the Greensboro Massacre was the opening shot of what would be the Reagan years' war on labor and blacks. When the Klan announced it would "celebrate" this massacre on November 10 in Detroit, the Spartacist League initiated a labor/black mobilization that drew over 500, many of them black auto workers, who made sure that the Klan did not ride in the Motor City. In organizing the protest we had to overcome opposition from the union and black misleaders and face down a ban on anti-Klan marches ordered by black Democratic mayor Coleman Young. In city after city over the following years, when KKK and fascist provocations have been threatened, we have repeatedly brought out core battalions of black and labor militants who understand we can't ignore the fascists and Klan—we must stop them.

In recent years, efforts to commemorate the Greensboro Massacre have been directed toward establishing a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission," which was empanelled in June, and on November 13 a march "for Justice, Democracy and Reconciliation" will be held in Greensboro. The commission is modeled on the South African commission, which has served to whitewash the crimes of apartheid-era butchers and to assure a peaceful transition to neo-apartheid rule under the ANC (African National Congress), which continues the superexploitation and oppression of the black and other non-white masses.

The Greensboro Massacre was racist murder. The truth is that no justice can come from the same capitalist state whose forces helped to orchestrate the killings in the first place. "Reconciliation" with the forces of racist reaction and with the capitalist rulers who keep the fascist bands in reserve to unleash against the working class in times of social crisis can only serve to politically disarm and demobilize workers and the oppressed in the face of fascist terror.

We honor the Greensboro martyrs—Cesar Cauce, Michael Nathan, Bill Sampson, Sandi Smith and James Waller—as well as the many others who were wounded that November day. They take their place among a proud roster of fighters for the working people and oppressed before them, whose memory must be seared into the consciousness of the working class.

Citing the executions of the Haymarket martyrs in 1887 and of Joe Hill in 1915 and the brutal 1919 attack and subsequent frame-ups of Industrial Workers of the World members in Centralia, Washington on the one hand and the greatest victory for the international working class, the Russian Revolution of 7 November 1917, on the other, James Cannon, then secretary of the International Labor Defense and later founder of American Trotskyism, wrote in "The Red Month of November" (*Labor Defender*, November 1927):

> "A red stream runs through the month of November, marking in its course many struggles of the working class of this country, here with defeat there with victory, always with inspiring record of working class courage, exemplary in its noble devotion to the cause of the oppressed, magnificent incidents of solidarity and self-sacrifice, instructive milestones along the difficult road to liberation. It is a record to sharpen the hatred of labor to jailors and assassins, to increase the respect and pride we have for our fighters."

We remember and honor the Greensboro martyrs by fighting for the freedom of imprisoned victims of capitalist state repression, like death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. We honor them by fighting to build a revolutionary workers party that will fight to put the working class in power through a socialist revolution that will make sure there will be no more Greensboros. ■

Editorial Note

Army Reservists Refuse "Suicide Mission"

——U.S. Out of Iraq!——

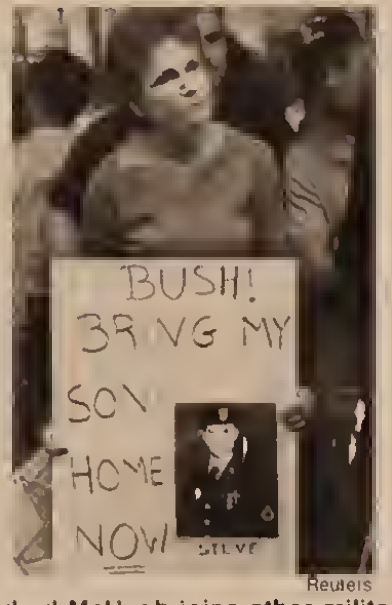
On October 13, 18 reservists of the 343rd Quartermaster Company refused to drive their trucks, bearing jet fuel of questionable quality, from the Tallil air base in the relatively secure Shi'ite south of Iraq into the current inferno of resistance around Baghdad. Their reasons were both mundane and compelling. Assigned to drive decrepit vehicles without a semblance of armoring and denied other military support or even radios to communicate should they encounter difficulties, the 18, led in their resistance by a 24-year Army veteran, Staff Sgt. Michael Butler, saw their mission as a potential death march. For months, members of the company had complained to their officers, the "chain of command," about these conditions. That mattered not. The view of assorted experts polled by the ever-so-objective *New York Times* (17 October) as to whether soldiers can justly disobey such an order was encapsulated most succinctly by Eugene R. Fidell, a teacher of military justice at the Harvard Law School: "The short answer to the question is no." The "chain of command" is much like the one in the tank of a toilet: once pulled, the fundamental motion is down.

The fact that two of the targeted leaders of the 18 reservists are black men is not surprising. Though the American military is volunteer, its ranks are made up largely of working-class, black and minority youth who join overwhelmingly for economic incentives (what is known as the "economic draft"). And within that context, black soldiers have historically been saddled with some of the most dangerous, and dirty, work. For the capitalist rulers, whether in pursuit of imperialism abroad or profits at home, the lives of black working people are utterly expendable. At the same time, with a stretched military where reservists in their forties are called up for duty, and where those whose tours of duty have expired are forced to remain in Iraq (what the military euphemistically calls "stop-loss"), there is palpable resentment among the troops. The *New York Times* (24 October) quoted a lance corporal saying, "The funny thing that we laugh at sometimes is that the terrorists and us want the same thing. We don't want to be here and they don't want us here." It is because they want their loved ones back home that military families have been prominent in antiwar demonstrations in the U.S.

We have a side in the current occupation, as we did during the war—against bloody U.S. imperialism. We say, "Defend the peoples of Iraq against U.S. attack!" and call for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq. Not one person, not one penny for the imperialist military! Insofar as the Iraqi forces on the ground aim their attacks against the occupation forces, we stand for their military defense against U.S. imperialism, no matter how reactionary the politics of these Iraqi forces may be. Every blow inflicted against the occupation forces is in the interest of workers and the oppressed around the world, as well as being in the interests of those soldiers who despise the predatory and imperialist cause for which they have been mobilized in Iraq.

At the same time, we do not groove on the deaths of American soldiers. Whatever the political sympathies of the reservists who disobeyed their orders, their act represented a cry of the cannon fodder refusing to be the cannon fodder. And it is historically the refusal to die that has sparked some of the most heroic resistance by soldiers to their imperialist militaries.

The ongoing bloody military offensives against rebellious cities in Iraq are in the service of suppressing an anti-occupation struggle that is just and defensive. For his part, Kerry, who opposed the Vietnam War many years ago—at a time when significant sections of both parties acknowledged it had become a *losing* war for the U.S.—now stands as the candidate who, more vigorously than Bush, would "finish the job" in Iraq. The situation requires the forging of a working-class party in the U.S. to marshal the forces of all those opposed to injustice, exploitation and oppression to overturn the bloodsoaked imperialist order. *Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution!* ■



Reuters

Mildred McHugh joins other military families at June press conference in support of Michael Moore film *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

London: Anarchist Protests Enrage Social Democrats

Uproar at European Social Forum

LONDON, October 24—The European Social Forum (ESF) came to London last weekend, bringing in over 20,000 people, overwhelmingly from continental Europe. But those who bought into the standard ESF promise that "another world is possible" found themselves trapped in "Ken's World." That is Ken Livingstone, New Labour's Mayor of London. This event was bankrolled, orchestrated and tightly controlled by the Mayor's office with the able assistance of supporters of Socialist Action who are highly paid executives in his administration and the unpaid services of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). This "anti-capitalist" shindig was so tame that it was endorsed by the labour statesmen and House of Lords hopefuls of the Trades Union Congress (TUC). At the recent Labour Party conference the TUC tops were instrumental in defeating a motion calling for withdrawal of British troops from Iraq.

Amidst the ongoing carnage in Iraq under the savage occupation by U.S. and British imperialist forces, a plenary session on the opening day of the ESF featured a stooge of the imperialists' stooge government, Sobhi Al-Mashadani, representing the Iraq Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU). The IFTU achieved notoriety at the Labour Party conference as a shill for Tony Blair and British imperialism. Invited by British trade-union bureaucrats, IFTU representative Abdullah Muhsin's intervention was key to defeating the motion calling for early withdrawal of British troops from Iraq. In an (undated) open letter to "trade union delegates at the Labour Party conference," Muhsin argued that "the multinational force is there to help our democracy" and opposed the call for the early withdrawal of troops, saying it "would be bad for my country, bad for the emerging progressive forces, a terrible blow for free trade unionism, and would play into the hands of extremists and terrorists."

Now the IFTU was being trotted out at the ESF for a session calling to "End the occupation of Iraq"! Small wonder that enraged Iraqi exiles and others kicked up a storm of protest against Al-Mashadani. As Iraqi novelist Haifa Zangana, who had encouraged people to protest, argued: "If he is the trade union secretary he should have been elected by the workers but he has been appointed by the government. He is part of the puppetry" ([London] *Guardian*, 18 October).

In the aftermath, the TUC issued a public statement condemning "the attempts of a few to prevent the views of Iraqi trade unionists from being heard." While even this labour apologist for imperialist occupation has the right to be heard—and to be vigorously challenged—as proletarian revolutionary internationalist opponents of the imperialist occupiers, our sympathies lie with the protesters. At the same time we can't help but note that there were no protests against the British trade-union tops like Dave Prentis of Unison, who also spoke at the ESF. Prentis was among the union bureaucrats who invited the IFTU to the Labour and TUC conferences. These labour lieutenants of capitalism were the real shills for British imperialism—and hardly for the first time: It was their votes that saved Blair from embarrassment at the Labour Party conference by defeating the motion opposing the occupation.

Indymedia

London, October 17: Some 75,000 march in opposition to imperialist occupation of Iraq.

A Very British Coup

The following night a group of 150-200 anarchists staged their own "palace coup" at Alexandra Palace, the citadel of Livingstone's ESF. Marching into a meeting where Livingstone was scheduled to speak, the anarchists got on the platform, hoisted banners reading "Ken's Party War Party" and "Another World Is for Sale." Various anarchist speakers addressed the assembled for about half an hour, protesting about harassment by Livingstone's cops and the FBI seizure of Indymedia servers in Britain and elsewhere (see *WV* No. 834, 15 October). A statement was also read out by Babels Co-ordinators, an organisation of voluntary interpreters, which protested that some of their fellow interpreters were barred from entering Britain due to the racist immigration policies of the Labour government.

In his first campaign for the mayor's seat in London, Livingstone backed a massive police assault on young May Day 2000 "anti-capitalist" protesters who had suitably and irreverently decorated a statue of imperialist butcher Winston Churchill. This didn't stop the likes of the SWP, Workers Power and the Socialist Party from campaigning for Livingstone, who has subsequently vastly augmented the notoriously racist London police force. During the mayoral election campaign this summer, the SWP's Lindsey German stood as a candidate for the Respect Coalition, and once again called for second preference votes to Livingstone. Back in the days when he was known as "Red" Ken, Livingstone played footsie with Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party, which played a central role in the anti-Communist witchhunt of miners union leader Arthur Scargill, feeding former prime minister Margaret Thatcher's efforts to smash the militant miners union on the eve of its heroic 1984-85 strike. Today a lighter shade of red, Livingstone has been welcomed back into the fold of Blair's New Labour Party as its Mayor of London, from which seat he aimed to bust a strike by London Underground subway workers this summer, calling on RMT members to cross their own picket lines.

Presumably having been tipped off about the protest, Livingstone didn't show his face at the Alexandra Palace meeting. Incensed that the anarchists had rained on Livingstone's and their parade, leading SWPer Weyman Bennett, who chaired the meeting, tried to violence-bait and race-bait the anarchists. But even the bourgeois *Guardian*—which had special status as "media partner of the ESF" and thus was hardly sympathetic to the protest—noted (18 October) that "Saturday night's storming of the stage by several hundred people denouncing mayor of London Ken Livingstone for hijacking the event reflected genuine anger about the way the event had been organised." After their half-hour political protest the anarchists led a walkout from the ESF and the meeting continued.

For our part, we have to give the anarchists an "A" for audacity for protesting Livingstone and trying to lead a walkout from the bureaucratic reformist circus of the ESF. At the same time we have to point out that they are hardly an alternative politically, and certainly not to the "authoritarianism" they claim to disdain. On the contrary, when it comes to anti-communist exclusion, the anarchist grouping known as the Wombles proved themselves to be more than equal to the bureaucratism and thuggery of the SWP whom they so despise. As soon as our comrades set up a literature table outside the Wombles' alternative event, "Beyond ESF," at a North London campus, the organisers shut it down, grabbing our papers and telling us to get "that Spartacist shit" out of here. They howled anti-communist abuse and, with no sense of irony, condemned us as "authoritarian" while hounding us out of the grounds of a public campus. Nonetheless we defend *them* against the forces of the capitalist state and the scurrilous charges being hurled by the SWP.

Blood Line in Genoa

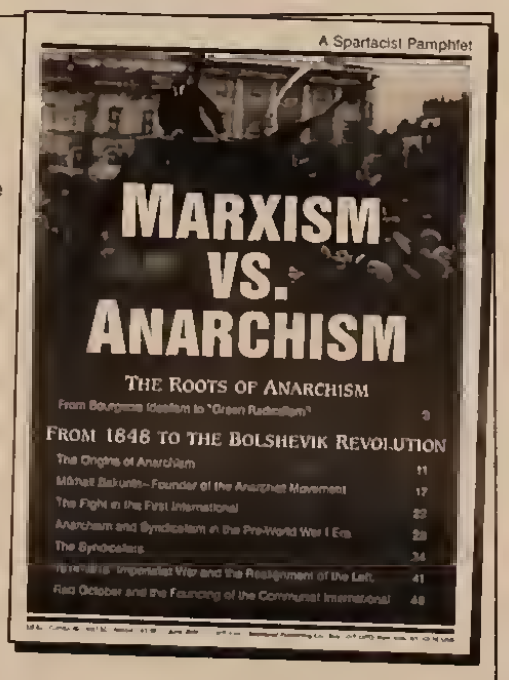
In the aftermath of the ESF, Alex Callinicos in *Socialist Worker* despicably revived the slander campaign against the anarchists that blamed them for the police-state violence that led to the murder of protester Carlo Giuliani in Genoa in 2001. He writes: "There was a downside to the ESF. There were a few ugly incidents that marked the re-emergence of the anarchist Black Block whose thuggish behaviour during the Genoa protests of July 2001 played so disastrously into the hands of the police" (*Socialist Worker*, 23 October). As exposed in a 19 October statement by the Italian COBAS unions, marshals at the October 17 ESF demonstration sponsored by the SWP-dominated Stop the War Coalition called the cops on anarchists and others who wanted to inform the crowd that anarchists had been arrested on the way to the march. From their vantage point at the front of the march, representatives of the COBAS unions wrote:

> "The closing rally for the European Social Forum in London has been deeply marred by the intolerable behaviour of the British Organising Committee, and in particular by the forces that dominate it: the Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Action (the group behind London's Mayor Ken Livingstone) and some trade unions. Several hundred young people coming from the 'autonomous spaces'... were coming to the demonstration when the police attacked them making four arrests (two Italians and two Greeks).
>
> "Despite the insistent requests from the Italian delegation at the head of the march to demand their liberation, the British Committee did not say a word.
>
> "At the end of the march, when trying to give news of these events from the stage, we discovered that access to this was restricted to the British Committee....
>
> "At this point the young people previously surrounded by police were trying to access the stage, upsetting the stewards of the rally, who called the police provoking further arrests, bringing the total to a number of nine."

continued on page 11

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International. Later articles discuss the pre-World War I period and the impact of the war, the 1917 October Revolution and the founding of the Communist International on the anarchist and syndicalist movements.

The first article addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called "death of communism," are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. The pamphlet is dedicated to the fight to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism, the communism which animated Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party.



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Young Spartacus

High School Students Drive Military Recruiters Off Campus

Chicago

This article is based on a report by a Spartacist comrade on an October 5 meeting at Senn High School, a heavily immigrant and minority public school on Chicago's North Side.

It's not every day you get to drive the military off campus! Around 800 students, parents, teachers and other activists poured into the auditorium of Senn High School, where Colonel Rick Mills, alderman Mary Ann Smith and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Deputy CEO David Pickens were trying to sell a proposal to turn part of Senn into a naval academy. They encountered more than they bargained for when the angry audience drove the military out of the meeting.

There are already two high schools that are military academies around the city—the most notable one being the predominantly black Bronzeville, on Chicago's South Side, whose signature is strict discipline, with students parading around in military uniform. As in many other cities, there are also Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in many of the high schools.

The auditorium was filled with indignant students, parents, some youth from the Revolutionary Communist Party-built Not In Our Name (NION) and our comrades from the Chicago SYC and Spartacist League. Many people were standing up holding protest signs in different languages (a reflection of the diversity of the high school). A group of youth marched through the auditorium holding their signs up high. While most signs were calling to "Save Senn" and "Protect Diversity," there were signs against the occupation of Iraq and the "Renaissance 2010" plan, a program designed to close down the 100 "worst performing" schools in the city (i.e., poor and predominantly black) and replace them with union-busting charter schools (see "Charter Schools: An Attack on Public Education," *Workers Vanguard* No. 825, 30 April).

The CPS official was first to speak, receiving catcalls and scattered shouts until the principal calmed everyone down. The military guys didn't come in uniform so it was not immediately clear who the colonel was when he got up to speak; once it became apparent, the boos began. SYCers shouted, "Military off campus!", "ROTC off campus!" and booed as he tried to speak. One parent got up and shouted something that no one could hear, but the whole audience knew he was going after the military so they broke out into loud applause.

Realizing his attempts to "talk sense" to the crowd were going nowhere, Colonel Mills decided to show a Navy promotional video. As soon as it started we began chanting "Turn it off!", which was taken up by people around us. Soon the auditorium was filled with the chant: "We say no!" They were forced to stop the video temporarily. Somehow the principal managed to quiet everyone down. They turned the video back on, and we started chanting again. Soon the entire audience was in an uproar; we all joined in chanting "We say no!" Some people in the front stood up and turned their backs to the video and signaled for everyone to do the same. Within minutes, still chanting, everyone's back was turned.

The alderman was fuming, the video was stopped and the official meeting broke down. The colonel and his military entourage stormed out, and the place went up in cheers! Jesse Sharkey, a teacher at the school and a writer for the International Socialist Organization's (ISO) *Socialist Worker*, later wrote on Savesenn.org: "I personally appealed to Alderman Smith and David Pickens that I would help restore order in the meeting if they would take community questions and comments." But most of the parents and students were less inclined to compromise.

Sharkey started chairing an open mike. Many of the students and parents spoke passionately against the plan. The comments were largely focused on saving Senn, but many speakers also tied in broader remarks against the occupation and the military. When we got our turn, SYC member Tim Valentine began by saying that we are opposed to the militarization of Senn, and that the audience should commend themselves for driving off the military. He argued that you can't rely on the Democrats to stop the militarization of Senn, and that it is Democratic mayor Richard Daley pushing the attack on public education. He called for free quality education for all and spoke about the need for the working class in Chicago to take up the fight to defend public education. He concluded by saying that it is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party that can lead the socialist revolution.

We in the Spartacist League and SYC fight for the working class to break from all parties of capital. NION and the ISO, both of whom had members in attendance, proved during the antiwar movement that they do just the opposite. All the antiwar protest organizers (International ANSWER, NION, United for Peace and Justice—a coalition which includes both the ISO and NION) worked to turn the demonstrations into platforms for the liberal wing of the Democratic Party—the party of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the escalation of the Vietnam War. Democratic "doves," the Green Party and independent capitalist politicians like Ralph Nader—the ISO's candidate of choice in 2000 and 2004—talk peace only to get antiwar youth off the streets and into the voting booth.

After the auditorium was pretty much cleared out, a comrade peeked into the auditorium and saw a small crowd of angry, primarily minority, youth and, lo and behold, the colonel in the middle—he had crept back in and was now in a heated discussion. One young woman angrily denounced the colonel and told him to f--- himself; the other youth burst into cheers. Outside, we continued to sell our paper and distribute the SYC Ten Point Program, talking with youth and parents about how these attacks take place in the context of the American ruling class's increasing imperialist aggression internationally and the "war on terror" at home. As was shown by these hundreds of angry parents, teachers and students who sent the colonel and company packing, many people have less than no desire to kill or be killed for U.S. imperialist interests. ***U.S. military: hands off Senn High School!*** The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for free, quality, integrated public education for all! Defeat the racist assaults on affirmative action—no to cuthacks! Kick military recruiters off high school and college campuses! Down with the U.S. colonial occupation of Iraq!■

Indymedia photos

Hundreds of outraged students and activists pack Senn High School auditorium, protesting planned takeover of part of school by Navy.

UNITE HERE Strike Support Rally Endorsers

26 October 2004

To the editors of *Young Spartacus*:

In the otherwise very fine article in *WV* No. 834 about our work building the united-front rally on October 7 at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) for victory to the UNITE HERE hotel workers strike, there was one regrettable omission. While the article described the types of groups that endorsed the rally, it did not list them all by name. This is the list of endorsers in full:

Adam Fetterman, Vice President of Finance, Associated Students Council of CCSF*
Alan Fisher, Executive Board Member, American Federation of Teachers, Local 2121*
Chris Kendrick, Treasurer, Anarchist Library, CCSF*
La Raza Unida, CCSF
Labor Black League for Social Defense, Oakland
L. Paz, Department Chair, Philippine Studies Department, CCSF*
PEACE, Philipinos for Education Arts Culture and Empowerment, CCSF
Maxwell Raynard, President, Anarchist College, CCSF*
Revolution Youth
Arjuna Sayyed, Vice President of Cultural Affairs, Associated Students Council of CCSF*
Spartacus Youth Club
Darren Villegas, Treasurer, La Raza Unida, CCSF
Women United, CCSF

**Organizational affiliation for identification purposes only.*

Comradely,
Spartacus Youth Club at CCSF

The Struggle Against Parliamentarism, Sectarianism

Communist Policy in Bourgeois Elections

We print below a slightly edited educational presentation given by comrade Mary Ann Clemens to the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club on 21 October 2003. Though delivered at the time of the California gubernatorial recall election last autumn, the material comrade Clemens presented is quite relevant to the upcoming general elections and beyond. The presentation fleshes out our own use of the tactic of critical support in California last fall. At the time, we wrote in *WV* No. 810 (26 September 2003):

> "We originally decided to abstain on the recall because we want neither to support a capitalist politician, in this case the Democratic governor, nor to implicitly support a capitalist (likely Republican) replacement. The SWP's election platform, which presents, in however crude a way, a working-class line, allows us to make concrete and clear-cut our opposition to Davis while at the same time expressing our opposition to the Republicans' attempted electoral coup."

* * *

PA Olsup

Lenin wrote *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder* for Second Comintern Congress (1920) to guide interventions into mass reformist workers parties—including use of electoral tactics—to split them, win workers to communism.

In preparing this class, in view of the party's attitude and our change in position on the California recall election, it occurred to me that we are dealing with much more than the lessons of Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*. This book, and our recent experience, raise the question of the ABCs: What is communist work? What is our job about? These questions were fought out in the newly formed Communist International (Comintern) and its developing member parties. So I thought it would be helpful to start by giving a brief idea of where the American party came from.

1919

1919 was a busy year in the international workers movement. It was the height of the wave of post-World War I international labor radicalism, inspired by the Russian October Revolution. The "Spartacus" uprising of revolutionary workers took place in Germany; the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic was founded and crushed. The Communist International was founded. Amid the wave of strikes that swept through the U.S. was the Seattle general strike. The bourgeoisie paid back these struggles in kind, with massive repression. As a result of the "Palmer raids," a centerpiece of the American ruling class' "red scare," the government imprisoned large numbers of militant leftists and labor activists and deported numerous foreign-born leftists under the infamous "criminal syndicalism" laws. The bosses played the race card for all it was worth, too. The year 1919 saw the Chicago anti-black pogrom, as well as many others across the country. In Chicago, the backdrop was a bitterly fought organizing drive in the meatpacking industry, during which the bosses used racism as a wedge between black and white workers.

There was tumult in the socialist movement in 1919. A major realignment of the left was taking place around this time all over Europe. In the U.S., the left wing split precipitously from the American Socialist Party (SP). In this country, Louis Fraina was one of the two main figures in the American left-wing socialist milieu. He founded the Communist Party of America (CPA). Seven foreign-language federations from the SP dominated his organization. The workers in this organization didn't speak much English—the membership were Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Letts (Latvians), Estonians, Poles, Russians, etc., who had grown up in the clandestine conditions of heavy-handed repression in the tsarist empire. The other leading figure was the radical journalist John Reed, and James P. Cannon, the future American Trotskyist leader, soon joined him. Reed's organization was the Communist Labor Party (CLP). The problem was that they had split from the SP too soon, cutting themselves off from a layer of socialists, many of whom could have been won over to communism by a resolute political struggle within the Socialist Party.

Sterile Ultraleftism

They were for class struggle, all right, but the politics of both of these young communist groups can be characterized as sterile ultraleftism. They had been much influenced by two Dutch social-democratic "left-wingers," Anton Pannekoek and Hermann Gorter, and by Daniel De Leon of the American Socialist Labor Party.

So what did the CPA and CLP do? In response to the vicious assaults of the Palmer raids, they went underground and denied any possibility of ever working as a legal party. Second, the CPA and CLP refused on principle to work inside the reactionary trade unions and instead called for forming ideologically untainted "red" unions (a policy known as "dual unionism"). Their line on trade unions was pretty much "Destroy the AFL!" The American Federation of Labor's program was "partnership" between the capitalists and the workers. Now, the AFL's base was among the skilled crafts. As a rule, it did not try to organize the unskilled in mass industrial unions, and many of the AFL's unions discriminated against black workers.

Third, the CPA and CLP refused to fight for partial demands in the course of the struggle for socialism and regarded that as trimming their program. And last but not least, they were bitterly antiparliamentarist—they wouldn't be caught dead in the same room with a member of Congress, much less think of running for legislative office. These politics were quite similar to those of Amadeo Bordiga, a left-winger in the Italian SP who became an early leader of the Italian Communist Party and who played an important role at the Second World Congress of the Communist International.

The still separate organizations selected Fraina and Reed as delegates to the Second Congress. First Reed and then Fraina took off on the months-long, dangerous trip to Moscow. In the meantime, the struggle for the fusion of these two American groups and against their ultraleft politics raged at the urging of Lenin and the Communist International. The Comintern had to win this fight if a Communist Party was to be built in the U.S. James P. Cannon was the first of the American leaders who began to get it. He gave a powerful speech against dual unionism at a U.S. convention in May 1920. And at that convention, the CLP and a split from the CPA fused to form the United Communist Party. This is a month before the Second Congress and a month before Lenin published *"Left-Wing" Communism*.

The Second Congress of the Communist International

News of the fights going on in the U.S. didn't reach Moscow until the Congress was in full swing. So Reed and Fraina both hit town in a fighting mood, each operating with an agenda to "get the franchise" from the Comintern as the official U.S. section. Reed was hot to wage battle against the Comintern's position in favor of working in the reactionary trade unions. He argued with the Comintern leadership and proposed from the floor of the Congress a change in the agenda, so the discussion on parliamentarism would come before that on the trade unions and shop committees. He also wanted English added as an official language for this point. His motion was defeated on the floor, but, in fact, the agenda was reorganized pretty much as he proposed. As for the reports, the Comintern leadership requested that Reed prepare a report on the Negro question in the U.S. Fraina got the assignment to make the report on the trade-union question.

Lake View Press

Chicago Historical Society

1919 strike wave in U.S., inspired by Russian Revolution, was answered by severe state repression, racist reaction. Left: IWW militants deported following Palmer Raids. Race riots in Chicago helped break union organizing drive (right).

Bourgeois historians like Theodore Draper like to portray the whole debate with Reed as an emotional power struggle. But the discussion on the American black question that the Comintern leadership insistently organized with Reed as reporter was also a historic moment in the development of American Communism. The Bolsheviks struggled with the American Communists to make a complete break from the indifference to black oppression and even outright racism of significant elements of the Socialist Party. They taught the Americans that the struggle to address the black question was the key to the American revolution. The Comintern leadership exhibited great skill in using the American delegates as resources in the struggles over the great questions before them. They changed the agenda of the American delegates, guided the trade-union discussion carefully and gave Reed quite a different and unique responsibility. The international leadership saw to it that he gave the Congress and the American Communist movement the best he had to offer.

Bolshevik leader Nikolai Bukharin's report at the Second Congress of the Comintern, the "Theses on the Communist Parties and Parliamentarism" and the intervention of the Bulgarian delegate, Shablin, are well worth reading. Bukharin, in explaining the theses, counterposes the previous epoch, the rise of industrial capitalism in Europe in the last decades of the 19th century, to the new epoch of imperialism. Bukharin explains the process of bureaucratization of the Socialist parties toward the end of the last epoch. The parties focused increasingly on getting more and more votes and putting more socialist delegates in parliament, to force through more and more reforms to improve the living standard of the working class.

In the epoch of the rise of capitalism, "parliament to a certain extent accomplished a historically progressive task as a tool of developing capitalism," as the theses on parliamentarism state. It was indeed in the capitalists' interests that the working class should at least be able to reproduce itself, which in the epoch of early capitalism was not always the case. Take the Polish-speaking linen weavers in Silesia just before the 1848 Revolution. They were squeezed dry by the rapacious German Junkers, their feudal overlords; their cottage industry was ruined by the competition of mechanized weaving, particularly in England. So they came out of their hovels and dank cellars, starving, freezing, in rags, barefoot, filthy, racked by epidemics, rose up, smashed everything in sight, including the looms, and ransacked the Junkers' great houses. After the bloody suppression, the Prussian government inspectors noticed that the majority of adult males in the region were

Brown Brothers

John Reed, 1917, shortly before going to Russia to report on unfolding workers revolution.

physically incapable of...serving in the army. So in this epoch it was possible to fight for major, lasting reforms. This is where, for example, fights originated, later waged by the German socialists, against child labor, for protective legislation for women, for disability insurance, for a shorter workday, universal suffrage, etc.

But gradually, the Socialist Party apparatuses, with a large fraction of their leading cadre respectably sitting in parliaments and with intimate ties to the procapitalist trade-union tops, grew together with state agencies. Daniel De Leon, for all his sectarian politics, was a great political leader of his time, and he commanded considerable respect from Lenin—De Leon coined the term we use today, "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class," to characterize the trade-union bureaucrats. Bukharin puts it like this: "What the reformists refer to as a growing over into socialism was the working class and the workers' organizations growing over into the bourgeois state apparatus" (*The Communist International in Lenin's Time—Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress* [1920], [Pathfinder, 1991]). More precisely, the politics of the bureaucratized leaderships became a component of capitalist rule, clothed in the criminal myth that socialism was attainable by gradually taking over capitalist society through sheer numbers—by socialist delegates "taking over" parliament.

From the Russian 1905 Revolution to World War I

With the 20th century, Europe entered the epoch of wars and revolutions—the imperialist epoch marked by the decay of capitalism. The Bolsheviks under Lenin had forged a programmatically hard party through struggles over more than a decade, and they definitively broke from the mainstream and right-wing Social Democrats in 1912. In contrast, according to the model of a socialist party put forward by German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, the "party of the whole class" was supposed to encompass all political tendencies of the proletariat, *including* reformism. Between 1905 and 1914, the European workers organizations fractured and regrouped *within* their parties into three main camps. In the right-wing camp were those who had become servants of the capitalist system, and on the left, there were those, looking to the 1905 Revolution in Russia, who had become instruments of the class struggle. And in the middle was the "center," led by people like Karl Kautsky, who acted as a barrier between the base and revolutionary Marxism. The Social Democratic parliamentary fractions reflected that polarization.

Splitting the Socialist parties wasn't so

Der Hauptfeind steht im eigenen Land!

German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht authored 1915 statement "The Main Enemy Is at Home!"

Dietz Verlag Berlin

easy. When the war broke out on 4 August 1914, the revolutionary Karl Liebknecht in the German parliament on the *first* round voted with the rest of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) fraction to *support* the government's war credits. He had to overcome his shock at the prospect of breaking party discipline. The class line now separated the program of reformism from the revolutionary ideas of the left wing. His subsequent "No" votes expressed determination to remain true to the interests of the working class. But the European socialist left wings were at that time unable to draw the organizational conclusion and strike out anew. They lacked a clear understanding of the new epoch, the new tasks before the party, a new conception of the party on the Bolshevik model, that is to say a revolutionary vanguard party fighting for working-class state power.

The question of how revolutionary consciousness develops divided many of the ultralefts in the Social Democratic parties from the Communists. They believed that spontaneously, as Clara Zetkin quoted one German left-winger, "the working class will create for itself the revolutionary class party and the leadership that it needs" when the revolutionary wave rises. Not only the German left, but members of the socialist left in other countries as well, had to be broken from these conceptions through a series of political struggles waged by Lenin and the Comintern.

Parenthetically, I believe that the official history of the workers movement always bought into the myth of universal pro-war enthusiasm in the European population at the outbreak of World War I, and exaggerated the extent of the hysterical social-patriotism and social-chauvinism. The *tops* of the European Socialist parties and the trade unions linked arms with the bourgeoisie in this orgy after 4 August 1914. The skilled workers, who constituted an important part of the base of the German SPD, were most prone to the SPD leaders' logic that "we are defending our national borders as the borders in which to build German socialism," etc. But the pro-war outpouring *did not* include the broad industrial working class. In the 1990s, a couple of books came out examining working-class response in Germany to the outbreak of the war. The newspaper reports and photographs of big *pro-war* demonstrations in the major cities, the proletarian concentrations, show only the *upper classes* and reactionary students! The workers remained tense but subdued, since their leaders, including the left-wingers in the Socialist parties, were in disarray. Without leadership, the workers eventually became demoralized. (See Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: The Myth of Enthusiasm and the Rhetoric of Unity in World War I Germany* [PhD thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1991].) But even after the Socialist leaderships' betrayal and the mass slaughter of the war, the Socialist parties retained important parts of their revolutionary-minded working-class base.

In each country the splits toward the Comintern were different. But in general, the new Communist parties founded beginning in 1918 and 1919 were heterogeneous and contained two or three mutually antagonistic future parties. In most cases, the task before the Comintern in 1920 was to get real Communist parties out of the mishmash. That meant propelling programmatic struggles forward in these parties, so that the revolutionary-minded left wings could coalesce and rid the party of its centrists and procapitalist reformists and opportunists. At the other end, there was the American party, dominated by sectarian abstentionist politics and ultraleft wings or independent formations such as in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands.

Bolshevik Position on Participation in Parliaments

The point the Comintern Congress had to make clear regarding "revolutionary parliamentarism" was that it was the antithesis of the parliamentarism of the Second International, the international grouping of social democrats that had included both revolutionaries and reformists, from which the Communists had split. The Bolsheviks explained at the Congress that the obvious primary concentration of a Communist Party's work is among the working and oppressed masses. But parliamentary work constitutes a legitimate *auxiliary* arena of work

continued on page 8

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Saturday, Nov. 6, 2 p.m.
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Information and readings: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

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Parliamentarism...

(continued from page 7)

that must be used as a multiplier to make the revolutionary program known and respected. Parliament is for us a forum to be used as Karl Liebknecht did, to pose every question from the standpoint of the interests of the working class and oppressed, so that our program reaches millions. When you read *"Left-Wing" Communism* and documents such as the "Organizational Resolution" ("Guidelines on the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties, on the Methods and Content of Their Work," adopted by the Third Congress of the Comintern, 1921, *Prometheus Research Series* No. 1 [1988]), there is a big emphasis on the combination of illegal and legal work. You have to remember that for the Bolsheviks, working under conditions of illegality, their participation in the Duma (the Russian parliament) was the main arena of legal work where members of the Bolsheviks could be publicly identified with the party.

The Bolsheviks recognized that the tsarist Duma was an impotent talk shop. As the Comintern theses put it, "Under present-day conditions of unbridled imperialism...parliament has been transformed into a tool of lies, deceit, violence, and enervating drivel" whose reforms have lost all significance for the working masses. Nevertheless, Lenin explains that the Bolsheviks almost *always* participated in some way in the Duma elections throughout the years before the proletarian revolution. In September-November 1917, they took part in the elections to the capitalist government's Constituent Assembly—on the eve of the October Revolution. Rarely during these years—such as in the events that culminated in the outbreak of the unsuccessful 1905 Revolution—was the tactic of boycott correct. In 1906, the Bolsheviks abstained, and Lenin fought for the party to recognize this as an error. A formative struggle took place in 1907-09 against the ultraleft Bolsheviks, known as the Boycotters, over participating in the elections at a time when it was crucial to use the Duma as an agitational platform while the party retrenched in a reactionary period. The Bolsheviks *always* worked out a position on the Duma elections, developed the tactics for participating, ran candidates, called conferences, demonstrations and on and on.

The objective situation before the party in every election is obviously different. The point is, *there was no recipe for the Bolsheviks then, and there are no recipes for us now. We have to figure it out, each time.* This is of course true in general, not only in working out how to intervene in a bourgeois election campaign. And this raises the ABCs of communist work. Making the commitment to join the movement and become a Bolshevik means that in addition to learning the history of the workers movement, you must learn to struggle with today's reality constantly and form an opinion as a communist. To do that you must inform yourself. Read the papers—the *bourgeois* papers. Listen to the news from NPR and BBC, from the point of view of a communist.

Roger Viollet

Party leaders at Second Comintern Congress, 1920. From left: Serrati, Trotsky, Paul Levi of Germany, Comintern president Zinoviev.

The "Organizational Resolution" from the Third Congress of the Comintern states:

> "For a communist party there is no time when the party organization cannot be politically active. The organizational exploitation of every political and economic situation, and of every change in these situations, must be developed into organizational strategy and tactics."
>
> —"Guidelines on the Organizational Structure of Communist Parties, on the Methods and Content of Their Work," *Prometheus Research Series* No. 1

Communists have a compass, the revolutionary program, and the leadership in whatever task, be it in the trade unions, be it in running candidates for parliament, must be guided by that program:

> "The art of communist organization consists in making use of everything and everyone in the proletarian class struggle, distributing party work suitably among *all* party members and using the membership to continually draw ever wider masses of the proletariat into the revolutionary movement, while at the same time keeping the leadership of the entire movement firmly in hand, not by virtue of power but by virtue of authority, i.e., by virtue of energy, greater experience, greater versatility, greater ability."

The resolution closes with an admonition for every cadre to keep sight of our historic goals:

> "The communist organizer regards every single party member and *every* revolutionary worker from the outset as he will be in his *future historic role as soldier* in our combat organization at the time of the revolution. Accordingly, he guides him in advance into *that* nucleus and *that* work which best corresponds to his future position and type of weapon. His work today must also be useful in itself, necessary for today's struggle, not merely a drill which the practical worker today does not understand. This same work, however, is also in part training for the important demands of tomorrow's final struggle."

The Italian Party at the Second World Congress

The Italian party badly needed sorting out. The leadership under Giacinto Serrati, who had led the party into the Comintern, was refusing to break with the reformist right wing. (In fact, Serrati remained adamant and when the CP split the next year, he went with the reformists.) In addition, they had an ultraleft opposition led by Bordiga that he had named the "Communist-Abstentionist" faction, also known as the "Left Abstentionist Opposition." Bordiga performed a very useful function at the Congress, giving a minority report on parliamentarism. His arguments served as a good foil for the discussion on ultraleftism.

Bordiga's reaction to the Bolsheviks' position on parliamentarism, understandable since the reformists were still in the party, was, "What? More of the same? No way!" This was just a knee-jerk reaction to the shameful betrayal of the pre-war right Social Democrats, and to bourgeois ideology that paints "political activity" as existing in parliament and nowhere else. He did not have the Bolsheviks' conception of the party, which he regarded more or less as a product of Russian exceptionalism. He did not understand how consciousness is formed and changes in class society. For him, the revolution must first destroy parliament. Then, so to speak, the Communist revolutionaries, kind of courageous adventurers, march through the factories with the red flag, calling for the proletarian revolution to galvanize the masses for the final struggle. But real events, real class and social struggles and real participation in such fights change consciousness among the working class.

So at the Congress Bordiga was subjected to hard political criticism when he objected that it was impossible to say anything in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, that work there was impossible and traitorous by definition. Bordiga maintained that parliamentary democracy is obsolete, etc., etc. Bukharin said:

> "Comrade Bordiga says it is technically impossible to make use of parliament, but he must prove that. No one will say that under tsarism we had better conditions in our Duma than exist today in the Italian Chamber of Deputies. No one has tried to speak in the Italian chamber in the necessary way. Why then do you assert, a priori, that it is impossible? Try it first—create some scandals; let them arrest you; have a political trial in the grand style. You have done none of that. This tactic must be developed to an ever higher degree. And I maintain that this is possible."
>
> —*The Communist International in Lenin's Time–Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress*

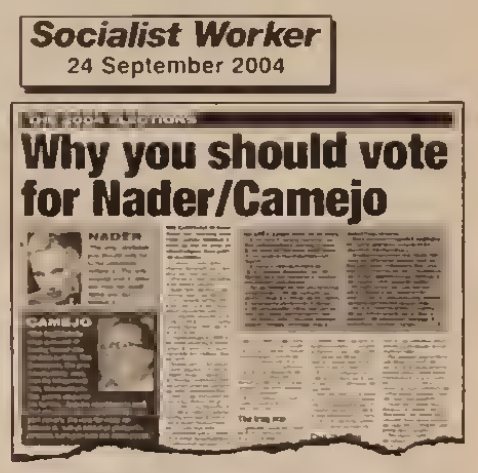
The Dutch left had also long maintained that parliamentarism was "politically obsolete." Lenin made a simple, realistic distinction: bourgeois parliamentary democracy is in fact "historically obsolete." But in terms of social and political reality, it is far from obsolete as long as millions of workers are voting for bourgeois candidates. As long as that is true,

> "...participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* on the party of the revolutionary proletariat *specifically* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, and for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden and ignorant rural *masses*. Whilst you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you *must* work within them because *it is there* that you will still find workers who are duped by the priests and stultified by the conditions of rural life; otherwise you risk turning into nothing but windbags."
>
> —V.I. Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, 1920, *Collected Works* Vol. 31 (1966)

The Task of Communists

On the question of "dual unions" and the refusal of many ultralefts to work in the reactionary trade unions, Lenin pointed to the source of their error. They equated the pro-capitalist tops of the unions with their base—which consisted then as now of various strata of workers whom the communists are obligated to reach.

The central task of the communists, from which the need for a vanguard party arises, is to bring communist consciousness into the class from the outside. Of itself, without this intervention of the party, the subjective factor in history, the working class cannot attain socialist consciousness spontaneously, but at most develops trade-union consciousness—which is still bourgeois consciousness. That means that their consciousness is limited to negotiating the terms of wage slavery as opposed to the consciousness of the need to overturn wage slavery. Because of the vastly differing conditions under which its members work, the consciousness of the working class is very heterogeneous. The layers in the working class range from the most politically advanced elements in the industrial proletariat to backward layers among whom religious obscurantism, racism and male chauvinism are rampant. This is because the bourgeoisie has a monopoly of social institutions to transmit its ideology to the entire population, and it pounds the entire population daily, hourly



ISO crosses class line, supports capitalist politicians Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo.

through the media, the schools, religious institutions, sports. And above all, the ruling class uses the family to pass on subservience to authority, obedience, etc.

"Compromises" and Our Reformist Opponents

Young communists should study carefully the section on compromises in Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism*. The International Socialist Organization (ISO) obscenely baits us with it, using the book to justify their support of bourgeois forces and politicians like Ralph Nader.

Lenin points out that under capitalist imperialism, from the heterogeneity of consciousness arises

> "the absolute necessity for the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, its class-conscious section, to resort to changes of tack, to conciliation and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small masters. It is entirely a matter of *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*—not lower—the *general* level of proletarian class-consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win."

Now, the "changes of tack, conciliations and compromises" Lenin is talking about here are with "the various groups of proletarians." Lenin's point is that centrist and occasionally even reformist parties *vacillate* between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The effect of our tactics, such as our use of critical support in the California recall campaign last autumn, is to drive the wedge in precisely when an

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organization on the left turns (in its publicly stated program) toward the workers, and to combat those that are on their knees before the bourgeoisie.

In the recall election, with the exception of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the ISO and all the other "left" groups oriented to the ruling class. They supported candidates committed to the *reform* of capitalism, to pressure the capitalists and their state to be nice to the workers and oppressed—the capitalist Green Party's Peter Camejo (an ex-fake Trotskyist), C.T. Weber (Peace and Freedom Party), etc., etc. We pointed out that their fanning illusions in such forces in no way represents the independent interests of the working class, *raising* the class consciousness of the youth and working class and their ability to fight, but instead *lowers* it. By giving critical support to the SWP's candidate, Joel Britton, we sought to draw toward us youth and workers whose heart was with the proletariat. Of course we know the SWP will turn around and plead with the bourgeoisie to make nicey-nice tomorrow, but what they wrote in their program for the recall elections, what they *claimed* to stand on, drew a crude class line, so that we could say, that's good, we can support that—not that we expect them to put their money where their mouth is. And in so doing, we could go into action, intervene, counterpose our own consistently working-class revolutionary program.

Cannon noted in *The First Ten Years of American Communism* that antiparliamentarism along the lines of the European ultralefts was present in a weaker form in the first program of the Communist Party in the U.S. But "that hodgepodge of ultra-radicalism was practically wiped out of the American movement in 1920-21 by Lenin." The American leaders were broken from the influence of De Leon and the Dutch ultralefts primarily by Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism* and by the Comintern theses and resolutions of the Second World Congress.

The American SWP in 1940

One of the readings for this class was the discussion printed in the *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-40)* between the SWP leadership and Trotsky. The fight, though on one level about electoral tactics, revealed adaptations to the anti-Communist Rooseveltian trade unionists, whom the SWP encountered in the course of their trade-union work.

Trotsky pounded the SWP's inexcusable abstention from the presidential elections dominated by Roosevelt:

> "I see there is no campaign in the *Socialist Appeal* for a workers' candidate. Why haven't you proposed a congress of trade unions, a convention to nominate a candidate for the presidency? If he were independent we would support him. We cannot remain completely indifferent. We can very well insist in unions where we have influence that Roosevelt is not our candidate and the workers must have their own candidate. We should demand a nationwide congress connected with the independent labor party."

Trotsky pointed out that it was principled and could be tactically smart to support the American Communist Party's candidate, Earl Browder. After the Hitler-Stalin pact was signed, the American Communist Party (CP), like the Stalinists internationally, had dropped the social-patriotic line of their Popular Front period. Instead of looking for alliances with a wing of the bourgeoisie against fascists or "reactionaries" in general, they adopted an antiwar, anti-imperialist stance. That offered the Trotskyists an opening to drive a wedge into the contradictions of the Stalinist tops' politics.

Trotsky patiently explained how the International Left Opposition [precursor of the Trotskyist Fourth International] was not politically closer to the Socialist parties in 1933 than to the CPs in 1940, but that the Trotskyists had then entered the reformist SPs in a maneuver called the "French Turn," designed to win away their left-wing elements. (That maneuver was so successful in the U.S. that it gutted the SP for good.) Trotsky asked: Since the CP won't let the SWP enter it, why not conduct a similar maneuver from the outside?

Trotsky hammered the SWP for not exploiting the CP's contradictions, asking the delegation what kind of policy they wanted—negative or dynamic politics:

> "If you are an independent party you must have politics, a line in relation to this campaign. If you had an independent candidate I would be for him, but where is he? It is either complete abstention from the campaign because of technical reasons, or you must choose between Browder and Norman Thomas [the SP's candidate]. We can accept abstention.... We can proclaim that everyone is a faker. That is one thing, but events confirming our proclamation is another. Shall we follow negative or dynamic politics?... We must have our own politics. Imagine the effect on the Stalinist rank and file...."

But no matter what Trotsky suggested, the SWP leaders, shocked at the thought of politically going after the Stalinists, reacted with "but...but": The "peculiar" Stalinist movement was hated by labor militants. Giving them critical support would "discredit the Trotskyists in the labor movement." The Stalinists would only "betray again." "The CP is not a genuine workers' party," Cannon argued that "the progressives will hate us if we support the Stalinists," showing where the SWP's trade-union policy was oriented.

Trotsky presented one tactical possibility after another, to try to get the SWP leaders to see the great flexibility available to them: They could publish a manifesto directed at the Stalinist workers, but there was so far not "even one single word from you on policy in regard to the presidential election." The members of the party could write letters to the editor of the SWP supporters' trade-union newspaper in Minneapolis, the *Northwest Organizer*. Trying one last time, Trotsky said, OK, abandon voting for Browder; abandon a manifesto and produce a leaflet making the same political points. But the SWP delegation showed no positive reaction to any of these suggestions.

Trotsky asked a rhetorical question and answered it: "Why this lack of initiative?... It is a photograph of our adaptation to the Rooseveltians." He went over to a direct attack against the SWP's orientation to the "progressives":

> "We are in a bloc with so-called progressives—not only fakers, but honest rank and file. Yes, they are honest and progressive but from time to time they vote for Roosevelt—once in four years. This is decisive. You propose a trade union policy, not a Bolshevik policy. Bolshevik policies begin outside the trade unions. You are afraid to become compromised in the eyes of the Rooseveltian trade unionists.... The danger...is adaptation to the pro-Rooseveltian trade unionists. You don't give any answer to the elections, not even the beginning of an answer. But we must have a policy."

Cannon asked at the conclusion of the discussion: "There has not been an approach to the Stalinists in years. Could it be possible?" The light was beginning to dawn, but we know that they didn't make the approach.

There was a lot at stake. Trotsky was trying to get the SWP leadership to see that their orientation to the Rooseveltian "progressives" in the trade unions was determining the politics of the party, and that the pro-progressive policy was *paralyzing the party*.

Fred Ellis/The Worker

1940 elections: CP dropped support for Roosevelt and ran Earl Browder on antiwar ticket, as shown in cartoon from its paper.

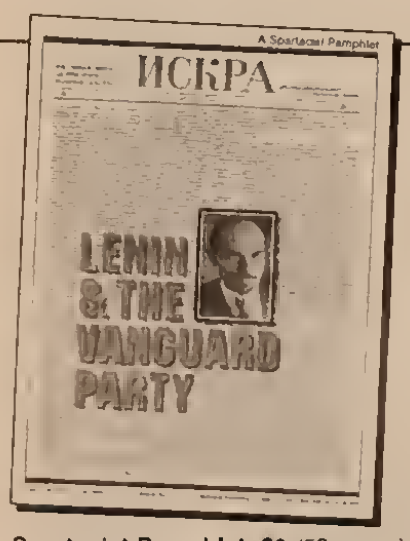
WV Photo

Spartacist-initiated 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization stopped Klan provocation in Washington, D.C., November 1982. Leading exemplary actions shows that our program can win victories for workers, oppressed.

So what was going on here? You have to keep in mind that in 1939, the year before, the fight against then-SWP leaders Max Shachtman and Martin Abern had erupted. The resulting split, in which they took out a viable chunk of the youth, was in May, a month before these discussions with Trotsky took place. The Shachtman-Abern minority had lunged to the right particularly after the Hitler-Stalin pact, when defense of the Soviet Union wasn't so popular with petty-bourgeois intellectuals anymore. What Trotsky is fighting about with the majority was that they had some of the same political problems as the minority—they couldn't deal with the Communist Party. Their policy of adapting to the "progressives" in the unions disarmed them in the struggle against the Shachtmanites. If they had pulled off a maneuver like Trotsky was suggesting, it would have had an enormous impact not only on the *Stalinist* workers, but would have dealt a serious blow to Shachtman's credibility with the more serious youth as well.

If we are doing our job, we always have to look for the contradictions: where we can drive in a wedge to put forth our program positively. We are obligated to develop tactics that are a lever to move as much weight as possible in terms of consciousness, first of the most advanced, then of more backward layers of the working class and oppressed. The Comintern Organizational Resolution talks about layers of workers taking up Communist slogans and carrying them on to others. There are significant examples in our history of just that happening: at our anti-Klan mobilizations when the bus drivers or longshoremen take bundles of our leaflets to hand out, and certainly during the incipient proletarian political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90.

Even if the scale is smaller today and we are at the stage of party building where we are accumulating the cadre to man the necessary party posts for much larger struggles in the future, the program is the same. The injunction to work out effective Leninist tactics, to intervene in every politically charged situation, every social or class struggle, no matter how partial, is the same.■



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Elections...

(continued from page 1)

of a capitalist system based on exploitation and profit. On the question of religion, for example, we fight for the strict separation of church and state; religion should be a private matter and we oppose any intrusion by the government into people's personal lives; we call for free abortion on demand; we defend the right of gay people to marry. But under capitalism religion serves a purpose for the rulers: it is a means to enforce social conservatism and defend the existing status quo.

It is said that whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad; and here Bush has a considerable head start. Bush and his cohorts have simply proposed that "America the Good" will dominate planet Earth. This is quite mad and dangerous even as a fantasy. But to be sure, the motor force that drives such aspirations is not insanity but the *raison d'être* of the imperialist system, which is based on the drive to control the world's markets and sources of raw materials and cheap labor. This drive has intensified exponentially with the capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92—a historic defeat for the world's proletariat. The Messianic and oddly demented policies of the Bush regime represent the logic of a capitalist class drunk on one success after another since the end of the Cold War. The U.S. is not only an imperialist power; it is the world's most powerful imperialist power.

There is an irreconcilable antagonism between the interests of the property-owning bosses who exploit workers to obtain profits, and the workers themselves, who own nothing but their labor power and who create the wealth of society. Workers need their own party, which will fight not only for the interests of labor but for the rights of black people, women, gays and all the exploited and oppressed; a workers party that will fight to overturn capitalism, creating a workers government and a society based on production for human needs.

WV Photo

Spartacists raise fight for women's rights at San Francisco antiwar protest, March 2004.

Newmarket Films

Getty

Lethal weapons: Mel Gibson's hit movie *The Passion of the Christ* and two-ton Ten Commandments monument in Alabama state judicial building reflect ominous rise of religious reaction.

What's the Matter with Kansas?

In our review of *Fahrenheit 9/11* (*WV* No. 829, 9 July), we noted that Michael Moore's "populist outlook leads him to ignore the Bush administration's close ties to the Christian right, to take notice of which would mean acknowledging that Bush really has a popular base. The box office figures of *The Passion of the Christ*, remember, are real." It is a measure of the deep religiosity of this country that the biggest "cultural" phenomenon in the U.S. in 2004 was Mel Gibson's film—with all its anti-Semitic overtones—which earned over $370 million in the box office and sold over four million copies in its first day out on DVD.

In a recent book titled, *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (Metropolitan Books, 2004), liberal Thomas Frank attempts to grapple with the resurgence of far-right religious fundamentalism as a major political force and with the apparently baffling lack of even elementary class consciousness among many blue-collar workers. While he reverses cause and effect, tending to see ideology as determining the lack of class struggle, and thinks the Democrats can be a solution, his "heartland" scream of outrage still captures something of the reactionary mess we're in today:

> "The country seems more like a panorama of madness and delusion worthy of Hieronymous Bosch: of sturdy blue-collar patriots reciting the Pledge while they strangle their own life chances; of small farmers proudly voting themselves off the land; of devoted family men carefully seeing to it that their children will never be able to afford college or proper health care; of working-class guys in Midwestern cities cheering as they deliver up a landslide for a candidate whose policies will end their way of life, will transform their region into a 'rust belt,' will strike people like them blows from which they will never recover"

Earlier on, Frank complained:

> "The trick never ages; the illusion never wears off. *Vote* to stop abortion, *receive* a rollback in capital gains taxes. *Vote* to make our country strong again; *receive* deindustrialization. *Vote* to screw those politically correct college professors; *receive* electricity deregulation. *Vote* to get government off our backs, *receive* conglomeration and monopoly everywhere from media to meatpacking. *Vote* to stand tall against terrorists, *receive* Social Security privatization. *Vote* to strike a blow against elitism; *receive* a social order in which wealth is more concentrated than ever before in our lifetimes, in which workers have been stripped of power and CEOs are rewarded in a manner beyond imagining."

What Frank describes may be more intense today, but this is how the capitalist politicians always work—they lie, cheat and steal.

Frank cites a pamphlet, *Is It a Sin for a Christian to Be a Registered Democrat Voter in America Today?* by a Wichita, Kansas, Christian and Republican ideologue. In fact, the growth of religion in mainstream politics in recent decades did not begin with the Republicans. It began with the Democratic Carter administration. And, like every rightward shift in this country, it was tied to a rise in racist reaction against black people.

The nomination of "born-again" Baptist Carter to head the Democratic Party ticket in the 1976 elections was not accidental. Carter openly proclaimed the virtues of "ethnic purity." Busing for school integration, having been defeated on the streets of Boston in 1974-75, was killed in city after city. Five leftist anti-racist militants in Greensboro, North Carolina, were gunned down in broad daylight in 1979 by a group of Klansmen and Nazis led by an "informer" for the Feds.

Coming to power just after the defeat of U.S. imperialism by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants, the Carter administration kicked off a "moral" rearmament campaign—an onslaught of domestic social reaction and anti-Communist "human rights" campaign against the Soviet degenerated workers state. These policies reflected a consensus within the American ruling class, which sought to overcome widespread public mistrust of the government following the Watergate events that forced the resignation of Republican president Richard Nixon in 1974, and to refurbish the tarnished credentials and military might of U.S. imperialism after Vietnam.

The religious right provided the shock troops for the right-wing backlash against the limited gains made by women and black people in the 1960s and early '70s—what the likes of the clerical Catholic reactionary Patrick Buchanan call the "Culture War." The religious right mobilized not only against the gains but against the defiance of the racist status quo shown by those who struggled.

With the election of Reagan, both the assaults on black rights and the Cold War against the Soviet Union intensified. Reagan expanded the clandestine CIA operation launched by Carter to fund Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan, turning it into the biggest covert operation by the CIA in American history. At home, Reagan's assaults on labor were exemplified by the 1981 smashing of the PATCO air traffic controllers union—using plans drawn up by the Carter administration. The fostering of religious reaction during the 1980s was so great that by the 1988 elections, Bush Sr., who was not an evangelical Christian, won the White House largely on the basis of the evangelical vote.

The fact that Bill Clinton associated with blacks and actually had black friends has endeared him to many black people—a measure of the deep racial divide in this country. But the very selection of the Clinton/Gore ticket in 1992—two white Southerners—was designed to win back the White House through a campaign of appealing to the Southern, white racist vote. This was symbolized during the 1992 campaign by Clinton flying back to Arkansas to oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black man, Ricky Ray Rector.

Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it"—and, in fact, accomplishing what his Republican predecessors could not do, actually did it. Clinton presided over a vast expansion of the death penalty and prison system, creating a huge national grid of cages for an unprecedented growth in the disproportionately black and minority prison population. The U.S. today has more people in prison, as a percent of total population, than any other country. In Iraq Clinton's policies killed far more men, women and children during the United Nations-sponsored starvation "sanctions" blockade and bloody bombing campaigns than Bush's invasion and occupation so far.

Both parties have shifted to the right, bringing reactionary social layers to political ascendancy. The fundamentalist Christian right is today mainstream, and provides a cover for the fascist fringe that terrorizes black people and guns down abortion doctors. As a political force, Christian fundamentalism represents backwardness and social reaction. It's anti-science, anti-evolution and pro-creationism. It's for prayer in public schools and the subjugation of women and children in the family: the antithesis of the values of the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, religious reaction in the U.S. grew, along with increasing attacks on the rights of workers, minorities and women. The removal of the USSR as the main enemy of U.S. imperialism has also meant that U.S. imperialism had to find a new enemy, which eventually, particularly following the September 11 attacks, became Islamic fundamentalism. The very fact that the line drawn in international politics is currently defined by a war against Islamic fundamentalism has served to galvanize Christian fundamentalism in the U.S. Bruce Bartlett, a domestic policy adviser to Ronald Reagan and a treasury official for Bush Sr., told Suskind in the *Times Magazine* article that the Christian fundamentalist Bush "is so clear-eyed about Al Qaeda and the Islamic fundamentalist enemy" because he has a "Messianic idea of what he thinks God has told him to do." Bartlett continued, "He understands them, because he's just like them." Indeed, Al Qaeda is Osama bin Laden's own "faith

This pamphlet reprints presentations given by SL Central Committee member Joseph Seymour on the origins of Marxism in the French Enlightenment and in left Hegelianism.

Also included are "150 Years of the Communist Manifesto" and "Marxism and Religion."

In the retrograde climate of post-Soviet reaction, the struggle to reassert the validity of the program and purpose of revolutionary Marxism is crucial for our fight for new October Revolutions.

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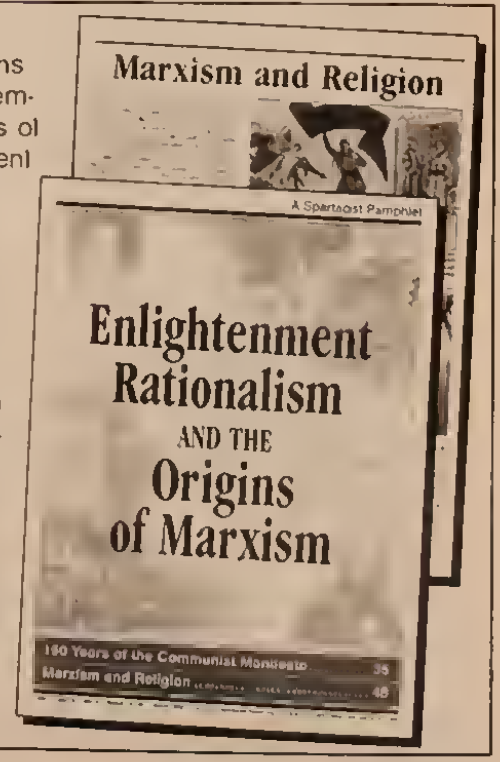

based" initiative, as well as a Frankenstein's monster that turned on its erstwhile masters.

For a Workers Party!

In the U.S., black people are always a central target of the very same forces that mobilize in opposition to abortion rights, gay marriage and any expression of social liberalization. This underlines that it is in the interest of black people to fight for the rights of gays, women and all the oppressed.

Because they are victims of unrelenting racial oppression, many black people sympathize with the struggles of other oppressed sectors of the population. But religiosity among black people also leaves them open to backward views on issues like abortion and gay marriage. A recent survey, for example, noted that support for Bush has increased among older, more conservative black people. In our article, "For the Right to Gay Marriage!" (*WV* No. 821, 5 March), we quoted a black Baptist minister who said, "If the K.K.K. opposes gay marriage, I would ride with them." But as we wrote in response, the minister "might saddle up, but it will be a short ride—the first target of this motley collection of nativist, anti-labor fascists is black people."

From the days of slavery to the present, the oppression of black people has been a fundamental feature of American capitalism. Black people are both segregated at the bottom of American society and integrated into the economy. If it is to fight for its own emancipation, the multiracial proletariat must take up the struggle for black freedom. The working class will transcend its divisions only through class and social struggle. Only by the common struggle of the multiracial working class under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party will a socialist revolution be made.

The working class needs such a party; but the primary obstacle to working-class unity in the U.S. has been the deep racial divide fostered by the American ruling class, which has served to retard the political consciousness of the working class. In this, the bourgeoisie is aided by the AFL-CIO tops, who do their best to corral the labor movement behind capitalist politicians, particularly Democrats, and the black politicians and preachers, who also do their utmost for the Democrats. At bottom, their message is deeply demoralizing: the *best* that workers, women and black people can do is vote once every four years for some cynical capitalist politician and then hope he won't kick them around too much once he gets into office. A workers party will be forged only through class and social struggle independent of the capitalist parties.

The absence of such struggle helps account for the remarkable phenomenon that Thomas Frank eloquently documents in *What's the Matter with Kansas?* With not much of a leftist movement in the U.S., the religious right has created a thoroughly bogus "class" argument against the "liberal elites." "Class" gets posed in the eyes of many in thrall to the toxic communion of the religious right not as bosses versus workers, but as the godly regular folks against the decadent, left-of-center, latté-drinking heathens who haunt art galleries in New York and Los Angeles.

The rise of religiosity in this country, particularly among working people, is directly related to the fact that most people in the U.S. can scarcely perceive a way to fight against the oppression and exploitation they suffer. (Frank, for example, notes that McPherson, Nebraska, the poorest county in the country, is solidly Republican.) As we wrote in "Marxism and Religion" (reprinted in the Spartacist pamphlet, *Enlightenment Rationalism and the Origins of Marxism*), modern religion is "a means both of oppression and of escape for the oppressed." Noting that "*Man makes religion*, religion does not make man," Karl Marx explained:

> "*Religious* suffering is at one and the same time the *expression* of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people.
>
> "The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to *call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions*."
>
> —"Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (1844)

We need to fight for a world of such material abundance that people won't need religion to make up for what they lack. And that is only possible through the overthrow of the capitalist order and the forging of a new socialist society that will open a new period of human development and lay the basis for the expansion of human freedom in all spheres. All the more necessary then, if humanity is to have any kind of future, to fight for what we want in this world. And the starting point for that is a break with the Democratic Party and a fight to build a workers party that will fight for socialist revolution.■

UPI

Corbis Hulton-Deutsch

Left: Outside historic 1925 Tennessee trial where Clarence Darrow (above) defended John Scopes for defying state law against teaching evolution. Tennessee ban was not overturned until 1968, as social struggles for black equality and against Vietnam War swept U.S.

Social Forum...

(continued from page 4)

We demand: Drop all the charges!

Despicable as the behaviour of the British Labourite left is, they hardly have a monopoly on appealing to or alihiing the forces of the capitalist state. In the aftermath of Genoa everyone from Susan George of ATTAC to Rifondazione Comunista to Alain Krivine of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire howled against the anarchists, blaming the *victims* for the murderous violence of the capitalist state. As our comrades of the Lega Trotskista d'Italia wrote in a protest statement, "Berlusconi and the G-8: Imperialist Butchers!":

> "With such statements these miserable misleaders prove their loyalty to the capitalist class and its police assassins and expose their attacks on 'globalisation' as rooted in social-chauvinist, reformist support to their 'own' bourgeoisies. Their 'movement' aims not to overthrow capitalism but to mask its monstrous reality."
>
> —reprinted in *Workers Vanguard* No. 762, 3 August 2001

Indeed, from their inception in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001 the entire purpose of these social forums has been to take radical youth off the streets and to corral them behind the "democratic alternative" of promoting the electoral fortunes of out-of-power parliamentary reformists. The most notable beneficiary of this was Lula's Workers Party in Brazil, which is now in government viciously attacking the workers and peasants. The renegades of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International organised the first World Social Forum where they held mock "participatory budgets," designed to school young radicals in administering the budget of the capitalist state. Now they have a minister in Lula's popular-front government that is administering budgets on behalf of the IMF and the World Bank while viciously attacking peasants in the countryside as well as blacks and ghetto poor in the cities.

On the eve of the war against Iraq the Florence ESF issued a resolution promoting the most grotesque illusions in the "peace-loving" credentials of their "own" imperialist bourgeoisies. It appealed to "all citizens of Europe and to all their representatives. Together let us stop the war on Iraq." It called on "all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans" (*Weekly Worker*, 12 September 2002).

While there was plenty of bellyaching over how the London ESF was tightly controlled by Livingstone's office, amidst cries of "he who pays the piper calls the tune," the fact of the matter is that all of these gatherings have been bankrolled by various capitalist agencies and institutions (including by the Chirac government in Paris last year).

The Wombles got the number of the ESF in their call for "Beyond ESF," which says that these social forums simply "parallel the development of capitalist institutions of governance" and "merely asks for 'capitalism with a human face'." But while posturing as a genuine anti-capitalist alternative they reflect all the prejudices of Cold War anti-communism, chanting in unison with bourgeois democrats that "absolute power corrupts absolutely" and that state power was the original sin of the Russian Revolution. Their call for building "autonomous zones" somehow free of capitalist exploitation buys into the myth that the oppressed can find liberation within the confines of bourgeois "democracy," i.e., the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Rejecting what they view as the "Leninist tyranny" of a unitary revolutionary programme and party seeking to mobilise the social power of the proletariat for the conquest of state power, the anarchists are impotent in the face of the highly organised, ruthlessly efficient forces of the bourgeois state. The end result simply paves the way for a return to the "politics of the possible" espoused by the very social-democratic sellouts the Wombles claim to reject.

The Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartacus Youth Group intervened at this ESF to win youth and others to a proletarian, revolutionary internationalist perspective. We recognise that the fundamental conflict in society is the conflict between capital and labour. Because of its central role in production, the working class is not just another "social movement" but has the social power to bring down the capitalist exploiters and their whole system of racism, national oppression and women's oppression as well as imperialist war. The proletariat has the power and the class interest to create a society based on collectivised property and a rational, planned economy, a workers state leading to a classless communist society and the withering away of the state. To achieve this we are dedicated to building an international Leninist-Trotskyist party.■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Police Terrorize Red Sox Celebrations

Boston Cops Kill Student

On October 21, the Boston cops gunned down Victoria Snelgrove, a 21-year-old Emerson College student majoring in broadcast journalism. Her "crime"? Nothing. Even the cops admit that. Snelgrove had watched the local team defeat the Yankees in the game that would carry the Red Sox to the World Series, and had afterward joined the 80,000 or so revelers in Kenmore Square with a friend.

In response to typical post-game rowdiness, the Boston police surged into the crowd, escalating the situation dangerously. A scuffle developed near where Snelgrove was standing. A cop opened fire with "less than lethal" pepper-spray balls. The "less than lethal" projectile hit Snelgrove in the eye, wounding her fatally.

Boston cops bought the weapon that killed Snelgrove as part of their preparations for the Democratic National Convention protests, where they maintained a repressive atmosphere aimed at squelching protest. The cops also purchased a 10½-foot-tall tank-like armored vehicle capable of holding 30 riot cops. Using weapons similar to those wielded by the Boston police in Kenmore Square, in April 2003 the Oakland police opened fire on antiwar protesters and trade unionists on the Oakland docks, wounding many of the protesters, some seriously. Now the Boston police have withdrawn these guns in favor of guns that fire the pepper-spray balls at a lower velocity.

Thompson/Boston Herald

AP

Riot officer aims pepper-ball gun, like one that killed Victoria Snelgrove, at Red Sox fans in Boston's Kenmore Square, October 21.

Throughout the Democratic and Republican convention protests, the cops in Boston and New York City carried out a massive repressive operation, arresting over 1,800 people for simply exercising their First Amendment rights. Particularly egregious is the case of black youth Jamal Holiday. While most of the demonstrators arrested during the protests against the Republican National Convention are now free, Holiday remains in jail, charged with assaulting a plainclothes cop who provocatively drove his motor scooter into a mass of protesters. Holiday's bail was reportedly upped from $50,000 to *$250,000* recently, based in part on the fact that political literature was found in his home. Drop the charges against Holiday! Free him now!

In Boston, the cops and their bosses in City Hall are using an obscene action by the cops to justify further repression. After *pro forma* expressions of regret over Snelgrove's death, Police Commissioner Kathleen M. O'Toole and Mayor Thomas Menino blamed "knuckleheads" and "punks" who, they claimed, had forced the cops' hand. This is a contemptible lie. Additionally, Mayor Menino has capitalized on Snelgrove's death to push puritanical measures down the throats of Boston's residents. Though stymied in his attempt to have alcohol banned in the Fenway Park area entirely during the World Series by bar owners worried about ruinous losses in revenue, area bars will now have a complement of cops in them. TV crews will be banned from the bars, supposedly for encouraging rowdiness. Those who cannot find a seat in a bar fairly immediately will not be allowed to wait outside and will be herded out of the area entirely. In short, the city has used lethal cop repression as a pretext for more cop repression.

Meanwhile, Boston University's Dean of Students, Kenneth Elmore, e-mailed the student body on October 22, ominously warning them in anticipation of the World Series: "In addition to any criminal prosecution, Boston University students involved in any illegal or inappropriate behavior will be subject to University judicial sanctions, including University expulsion."

As any resident of the ghettos and barrios in the U.S. knows, the cops kill. They act as enforcers for a system marked by the exploitation of working people and the oppression of black people, immigrants and others. Victoria Snelgrove is not the first victim of the killers in blue, nor will she be the last. At an October 24 protest against the police killing of Snelgrove in Boston, the Spartacist League carried a sign reading "Workers Revolution Will Sweep Away Police Terror—We Will Not Forget Victoria Snelgrove!" It is through the struggle to replace the racist, capitalist system with a just, socialist society that the police can be relegated to a barbaric past.■

Court Shafts US Airways Workers

OCTOBER 24—On October 15, a U.S. bankruptcy court ordered US Airways workers to take a whopping *21 percent* pay cut, a freeze or elimination of medical benefits, reduction or suspension of pensions, and to work longer hours and allow outsourcing of critical heavy base maintenance work to cheaper, i.e., non-union labor. The leadership of ALPA, the union representing the pilots, then quickly rammed through their own deal with US Airways, agreeing to an 18 percent pay cut. One airline worker told *Workers Vanguard* that bankruptcy has become the companies' preferred form of union-busting. By hiding behind the judge in his black robes, the bosses deflect mounting anger from the CEOs to the courts, and by implication to the union tops who bow to the courts.

The courts are the cover for the repressive force of the capitalist state. Laws protecting private property, laws effectively prohibiting union strike action (such as Taft-Hartley, Railway Labor Act) and court orders vitiating decades of hard-won union gains are enforced by the police, the prison system, and ultimately the army. Above all, the courts are used to repress those who challenge the rights of capitalist property and the exploitation of labor, or otherwise get in the way of the functioning of the capitalist system. The same cops and courts that send thousands of unemployed black youth to prison are used to bust up picket lines, frame up militants, deport immigrant workers and escort scabs.

Every modern industrial economy needs a functional airline industry. Without the aid of the civilian airlines, domestic and international trade and production can't move rapidly, and not even the U.S. government could move its troops or military cargo for its bloody occupation of Iraq. Airline workers have tremendous potential social power, precisely because of their centrality to the economy. But this power has been sapped by the "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class" running the unions, who boggle their own members by promoting illusions in the agencies of the capitalist class enemy, including the courts, and especially the Democratic Party. In this election year, the AFL-CIO brass from John Sweeney on down have squandered union funds to put Democrat John Kerry in the White House. In 1997, the AFL-CIO and pilots' union bureaucracy immediately acquiesced to President Bill Clinton's invocation of the Railway Labor Act against striking American Airlines pilots.

Labor has powerful weapons in its unity and collectivity, and for these to be used effectively requires conscious organization independent of the capitalist parties and capitalist courts. The unions were built and struggles were won in defiance of the capitalist government and the bosses' laws. Every victory for black rights, for women's rights, for union rights, has been won through hard class and social struggle, not by crawling to the Democrats or beseeching the courts.

A union leadership worth its salt would counter the offensive by the companies and the capitalist state by mobilizing joint actions by all airline workers and coordinating international labor solidarity. To fight outsourcing of jobs to non-union labor, and to combat the non-union carriers that drive down the wages of all workers, it's crucial to ***organize the unorganized*** and fight for ***equal pay at union wages for equal work!*** Airline workers need a single industry-wide union of all workers, from baggage handlers to pilots, to facilitate industry-wide strike action to defend and extend union gains.

Five years after the deregulation of the airline industry, Continental in 1983 pioneered bankruptcy as the road to profit, using Chapter 11 to void union contracts. US Airways has now gone this route twice in two years; American has used the threat of bankruptcy to wrench concessions; United has been in bankruptcy for two years and is maneuvering for a second round of cuts; Delta says it may declare bankruptcy to slash labor costs; ditto Northwest. Airline workers have moved their families several times just to keep a job, at ever lower wages, and thousands work second jobs just to put food on the table and avoid home foreclosures.

The companies whine that rising fuel prices drive up costs, but you won't see the courts ordering the profit-bloated oil companies to make up the deficit, or ordering the company CEOs to cut their wages or drop their golden parachutes! And it's not just the airlines—last month retired coal miners and their dependents in West Virginia were robbed of their pensions and health plans with a stroke of a judge's pen.

Enough! This anti-union offensive is also a clear and present danger to the entire public and an indictment of the irrationality of the profit-driven capitalist system. Who wants to board an airplane maintained by non-union, often unlicensed labor, flown and staffed by sleep-deprived pilots and flight attendants? And the U.S. air traffic control system is overstretched and antiquated. ***This is a major public air disaster in the making.*** It is desperately necessary to forge a new class-struggle leadership of the unions, and to forge a multiracial revolutionary workers party to sweep away the capitalist system and establish a rational, planned, egalitarian socialist economy, where those who labor rule.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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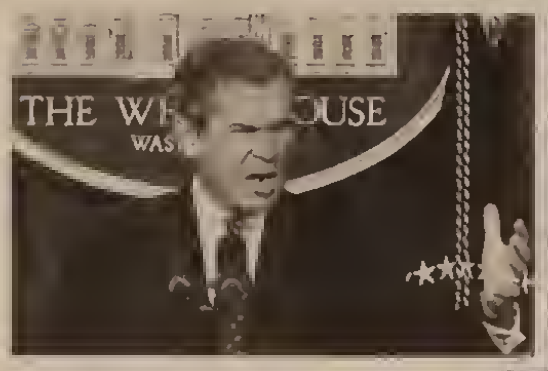
No. 836 C-701 12 November 2004

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Imperialist Rulers!
Down With Both Capitalist Parties—For a Workers Party!

Racist Fundamentalists Take White House, Again



AP photos

U.S. troops brutalize hospital workers and patients in onslaught against Falluja.

"I earned capital in the campaign—political capital—and now I intend to spend it" was the chilling message from George W. Bush following his election victory on November 2. The relatively high turnout for the elections was supposed to be good for the Democrats, but the "family values," "born-again" religious types also mobilized heavily for the oddly demented Bush administration, helped along by the continued attempts to disenfranchise black voters and no-paper-trail computers. Whipping up "war on terror" fear and religious and sexual hysteria was key, as referendums to ban gay marriage in eleven states, which all passed, helped to bring out the forces of deep reaction. The Republican consolidation of the White House and both houses of Congress is bad news for working people, blacks, women, gays and immigrants—all in the gun sights of the social reactionaries in power. One of the propositions that passed in Arizona denies government benefits to non-citizens. The Bush cabal now feels it has a mandate to intensify its war on working people at home and abroad.

And the first targets are the peoples of Iraq. As we go to press, over 10,000 U.S. troops, backed by Iraqi soldiers, are invading Falluja to crush any vestige of resistance in the Sunni city. Press reports indicate that most of the city's 250,000 residents have fled in fear of their lives. One of the first targets taken by the American occupiers was Falluja's main hospital, a calculated move to mute any news about civilian casualties in anticipation of the bloody massacres U.S. imperialism is about to carry out. The *New York Times* (8 November) noted: "The hospital was selected as an early target because the American military believed that it was the source of rumors about heavy casualties." A recent report from Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore concluded that between March 2003 and September 2004, some 100,000 civilians had died in Iraq.

U.S. Hands Off Falluja! U.S. Out of Iraq Now!

The very same ruling class that is raping the peoples of Iraq is also looting, fleecing and attacking the rights of workers and the oppressed at home. Working people in the U.S. must take a side against U.S. imperialism's occupation of Iraq and demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the country. Every blow inflicted upon the occupation forces is in the interest of working people and the oppressed throughout the world, not least in the U.S. ***Defend the peoples of Iraq against U.S. attack! Hands off Falluja! U.S. out of Iraq now!***

While Bush's victory is bad news, a Kerry victory would not have been good news. Kerry promised to continue the Iraq occupation, to increase the American military by 40,000 new recruits, and to get "tougher" with North Korea. The Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a ruling-class party dedicated to upholding the interests of the American capitalists, interests directly counterposed to those of the working class. U.S. elections, a limited form of bourgeois democracy in any case, serve as a deception whereby the bourgeoisie cloaks its class dictatorship with a veneer of popular approval. As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin put it in *The State and Revolution*: "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism." Working people need a workers party to fight for the overturning of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie altogether and its replacement with a proletarian dictatorship, which would mean the disenfranchisement of a tiny band of vicious exploiters and the genuine empowerment of the working people of America.

Labor Bureaucracy Demobilizes Working Class

There is a lot of hand-wringing over the election results, particularly in the urban areas of the so-called "blue states" where people watched in horror as one state after another went "red" for Bush. Liberal ideologues, European pundits and pro-Democrat leftist types now blame the supposed ignorance and backwardness of the American populace for Bush's victory. But responsibility for the lack of militant class struggle and, therefore, the backward consciousness of many workers in the U.S., rests with the very apostles of "reform." The current generation of the labor lieutenants of capital, that is, the top bureaucrats of the trade-union movement, and the reformist left that tails them, are responsible for the demoralization and demobilization of the American working class through the agency of the Democratic Party.

The trade-union tops have by and large abandoned effective methods of class struggle. When pressed by the workers to strike, they have enforced the restraints of bourgeois legislation, like the Taft-Hartley Act, designed to vitiate the workers' ability to shut down production and beat back the scabs. If forced to strike, these types have either quickly thrown in the towel or signed such egregious givehack contracts as to call into question the value of ever walking a picket line.

Had the unions devoted one-tenth of the resources and manpower that their pro-capitalist misleaders mobilized for Democrat Kerry to the strike by the United Food and Commercial Workers last spring, or to fight to organize Wal-Mart, or in support of the locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco, things could be very different. Instead of sending workers across the country to Washington, D.C. for the Million Worker March, which was a thinly veiled rally against Bush (i.e., for the Democrats), what if the left-talking bureaucrats in the ILWU longshore union had mobilized their members to walk a few miles from their union hall to help locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco shut down the hotels and actually win their strike?

The current trade-union bureaucracy, however, is an obstacle to militant class struggle because it is tied to the capitalist system and subservient to its state apparatus. Its support for the Democratic Party is in direct counterposition to independent class struggle. It is necessary to fight for a class-struggle leadership in the union, a leadership which can fight not only for immediate, economic demands, but on broader social issues. Defense of immigrant rights against the government's "war on terror," defense of abortion rights, freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolishing the racist death penalty—these are some of the causes that a class-struggle union leadership would take up, putting the massive power of the working class on the side of all the oppressed.

Although the bankruptcy of the Democratic Party as a force for progress has seldom been clearer, do not expect the

continued on page 12

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Slogans and the Iraq War

13 July 2004

Dear Comrades,

I thoroughly enjoyed your review of Michael Moore's movie, Fahrenheit 9/11 in WV of 09 July 2004, and found myself in agreement with it, but felt it lacked one thing it should have contained.

You write the following:

> "*Fahrenheit 9/11* features a number of scenes focusing on the impact of war on black people in America. Lila Lipscomb's story, the Marine recruiters prowling a mall parking lot looking for young black recruits, and the group of young black men who all raise hands when asked who has a friend or relative fighting in Iraq. These sequences powerfully evoke the economic draft, where it is those who are most ground down by the structural poverty and racial oppression of this profit-driven society who end up on the front lines of their oppressor's wars. Moore evokes sympathy for the plight of these working and oppressed youth sent off to do imperialism's dirty work. Many, including Moore, take this to argue that those who oppose the war should 'support the troops.' But Iraq is a clear case where it is necessary to take a side, and not the side of the U.S. or those doing its fighting—every blow struck against the American occupation forces is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world, including in the U.S."

I agree with your political statement here, but, living as I do in the deep South, with its many American imperialist military bases, and encountering every time I participate in anti-war protests people with relatives serving in the American imperialist armed forces, I find myself compelled to address this issue in more than general terms of simply saying, defend Iraq—which I do say, but not limiting myself to that.

It is not enough simply to say, Defend Iraq. One has got to, like Lenin in *Socialism and War*, say to those either in the imperialist armed forces, or those with relatives in the imperialist armed forces, that the exploiting filth put their kids and loved ones and themselves into harm's way, and it is necessary, exactly as Lenin said in *Socialism and War*, to propagate the need to turn the imperialist war against smaller dependent countries like Iraq on the part of big imperialist countries like the U.S. into a class war, a revolutionary proletarian class war, against the capitalist imperialist ruling class of the big imperialist country. If you don't do that, you run the risk of sounding like the somewhat gory-minded "Bolshevik" [sic] tendency, or others of that ilk against whom you have eloquently propagandized for their seeming grooving on the bloodshed of American working class kids. If one's in a situation in which one requires an answer to a question posed by some working class kid who's in the imperialist armed forces, or an answer to some relative of some such working class kid, one ought to have a political response, and one cannot exactly tell such a kid, "commit suicide." That's not a Marxist, Leninist, or Trotskyist "solution" at all.

I wish you would address this. I have had a number of discussions, from time to time, with anti-war activists who do have relatives in the U.S. imperialist armed forces. I have made the point that Iraq belongs to the Iraqis, and they are going to defend their country, and have the right to, and, by rights, American imperialism should be driven out. But there must be a strategic and tactical proposal accompanying that, and it is necessary to constantly stress the class enmity between the imperialist militarist brass of U.S. imperialism, and the kids they put into harm's way. Not constantly stressing that, in my view, weakens one's call to "defend Iraq," and makes it somewhat angularly abstract.

In paraphrasing Lenin's slogan, "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war," I say to either imperialist armed forces military recruits or to their relatives and loved ones, "Turn the guns the other way." Last year, in fact, during the lead-up to the imperialist invasion of Iraq, I had my own class struggle anti-war sign in one hand and a red flag with a hammer and sickle crossed with the number 4 and underneath the words, Long Live the International Communist League! Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky! on it, and I initiated my own improvised chant (among several improvised chants), which went: Soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, turn your guns the other way! I was the only one in several anti-war demonstrations to chant this, and I did so deliberately to drive a hard class line between the imperialist militarist brass, and the working class kids in the armed forces. By the way, I did not limit myself to this. In one leaflet I put out and passed out myself to several anti-war protests, I also drew a sharp line between most soldiers on the one hand and, on the other hand, the torturers at the Abu Ghraib prison. I think it's necessary to point out there is a difference. Obviously, in saying, "Turn your guns the other way," we are saying that to the rank and file of the U.S. imperialist armed forces seeking to suppress the Iraqi people, not to the Iraqi people fighting in self-defense.

I think saying, defend Iraq, is fine, but I think in situations in which one's surrounded by U.S. imperialist militarist bases, and in which anti-war activists have relatives serving in the imperialist militarist armed forces, taking the trouble strategically and tactically to drive home the class line between the imperialist and militarist brass on the one hand, and the rank and file kids in the armed services on the other hand, is very important.

Comradely,
Allan G.

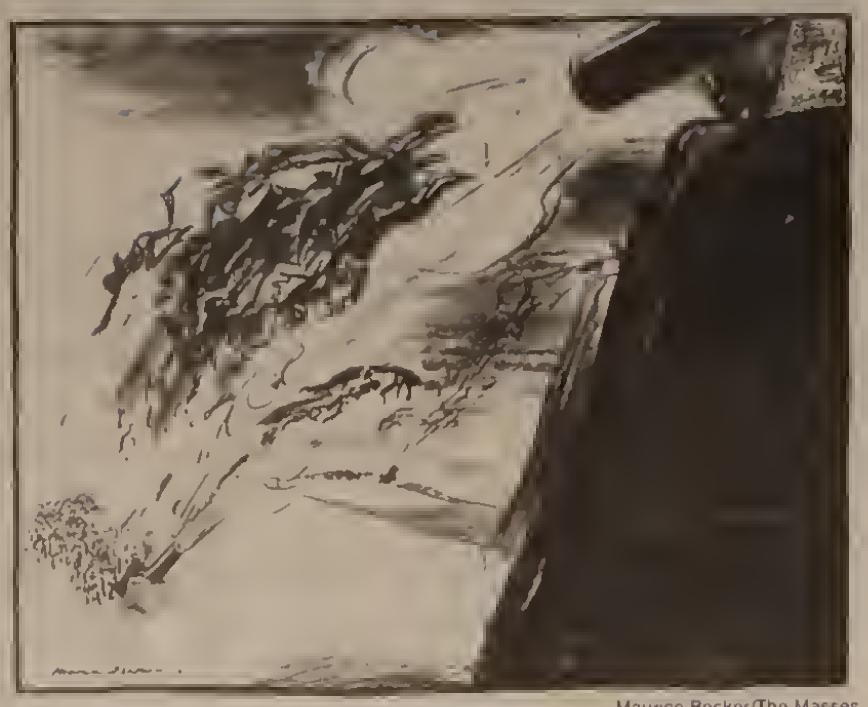
***WV* replies:**

As Allan G., a longtime sympathizer, points out, we do not "groove" on the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq. In "U.S. Bloodbath in Baghdad" (*WV* No. 801, 11 April 2003) we wrote: "It is America's rulers who bear all the responsibility for sending young working-class and minority men and women to kill and be killed in order to extend the power and profits of U.S. imperialism." At the same time, we had a side with Iraq in the lead-up to and during the war, and today have a side against the U.S. imperialist occupation.

The Marxist perspective on the military is to win its working-class base to the side of the workers. But as the military is a concentrated reflection of civil society, such a perspective can only be realized when civil society is gripped by tumultuous class and social struggle. American soldiers in the Iraq occupation who grow to understand that they are enforcing a reactionary and imperialist policy must also understand that insofar as they can mobilize against it, such mobilizations must be integrated with broader working-class struggles taking place in the U.S. Otherwise, isolated actions by soldiers—refusals to obey orders or more militant acts—will simply be met with swift, and often brutal, reprisals by the commanding officers.

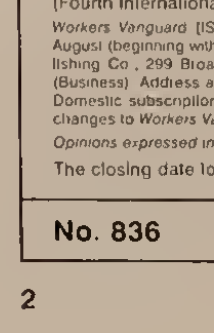
In "Army Reservists Refuse 'Suicide Mission'" (*WV* No. 835, 29 October) we explained: "Every blow inflicted against the occupation forces is in the interest of workers and the oppressed around the world, as well as being in the interests of those soldiers who despise the predatory and imperialist cause for which they have been mobilized in Iraq."

The American volunteer army at its base resembles a draft army—poor, minority and working-class youth who join mostly for economic incentives (the "economic draft"). Those U.S. soldiers and their families who come to understand that their class interests are opposed to those of the Pentagon brass, the Bush gang and the Democrats, must also understand the oppressive and exploitative nature of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.



Maurice Becker/The Masses

"Ammunition" by Maurice Becker appeared in the American left-wing paper, *The Masses*, during World War I.



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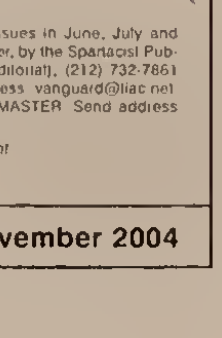

LENIN

Solidarity with Class-War Prisoners!

In 1986, the Partisan Defense Committee began sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners as an expression of non-sectarian solidarity. In so doing, the PDC revived the tradition of the International Labor Defense, which in the 1920s organized defense for workers, revolutionaries and leftists. In 1927, James P. Cannon—the future founder of American Trotskyism who was then a leading member of the Communist Party—wrote about the need for workers to demonstrate their solidarity with those imprisoned for taking the side of the working class and oppressed.

The *New York Times*, the organ of big business, is making its annual plea for contributions for Christmas to the "100 Neediest Cases." Other capitalist papers and organizations are conducting similar drives. The men, women and children of the working class, who have been on the rack of capitalist exploitation and are now dropped into the abyss of misery and poverty, are chosen and classified by these arch hypocrites—so their sanctimonious appeal can be made to the comfortable capitalists, to soften the bitterness of these few workers with the insult of charity, and to salve their own conscience by acts of "generosity."

This horrible farce is annually repeated in scores of other cities.

The militant workers have nothing but hatred and contempt for such appeals and drives. This year, therefore, they are again following the world-wide custom that has developed in the ranks of the working class for many years. It is the custom of raising a special fund for the men in prison for the labor cause and their wives and children, of transforming the hypocritical spirit of Christmas into the spirit of solidarity with the class-war fighters behind bars.

The International Labor Defense has already started a campaign for a Christmas Fund for the men in prison, and their dependents who suffer on the outside. The labor militants throughout the entire country are working to collect this fund. Nowhere has the appeal or the response been made on the basis of charity. Everywhere has been emphasized the duty of those who are outside toward the men on the inside....

The men in prison are still a part of the living class movement. The Christmas Fund drive of International Labor Defense is a means of informing them that the workers of America have not forgotten their duty toward the men to whom we are all linked by the bonds of solidarity. It is the Christmas drive of Labor and must have its generous support!

—James P. Cannon, "A Christmas Fund of Our Own," *Daily Worker*, 17 October 1927, reprinted in *Notebook of an Agitator* (Pathfinder Press, 1973)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

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The closing date for news in this issue is 9 November.

No. 836 **12 November 2004**

Down With IRS Witchhunt Against NAACP!

On October 28, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chairman Julian Bond revealed that the government was reviewing the group's tax-exempt status due to a speech he gave on July 11 criticizing Bush. An October 8 letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) threatened the civil rights organization that to keep its tax-exempt status, "leaders cannot make partisan comments in official organization publications or at official organizational functions." Ominously, the IRS is also demanding that the NAACP provide them with personal information about its 64 board members and detailed financial information about the convention where Bond gave his speech. This is nothing less than an attack on the right of free speech and association. It is a sinister witchhunt in which black rights organizations and any critics of the Bush administration could face vindictive reprisals on an explicitly political basis. And it has grave implications for all who oppose the racist, warmongering and religion-crazed Bush regime.

During the presidential campaign, Bush underlined his contempt for black people by spurning an invitation to speak to the NAACP. Though hardly radical, the NAACP—as well as leaders of the organization like Thurgood Marshall, who went on to become a Supreme Court justice—has faced scrutiny from the FBI in the past. Moreover, this would hardly be the first time an American government has used the IRS to target political opponents; the practice, for example, was widespread during the McCarthy era and Nixon administration. The government's willingness to explicitly attack an organization as mainstream as the NAACP reflects the staggering arrogance of the Bush administration. The Bush gang, bolstered by the bipartisan support for the rash of "anti-terror" laws like the USA-Patriot Act, feels it can lash out at its political opponents with impunity.

The political nature of this assault on the NAACP is underscored by the fact that the Bush administration has not subjected its own tax-exempt allies to similar scrutiny. In fundamentalist churches across the country, bible-thumping ministers roused their congregations against the spectre of gay marriage and promoted the Bush campaign from the pulpit. Meanwhile, Catholic bishops implied that the church considered John Kerry—along with all Catholic politicians who were against banning abortion—to have excommunicated themselves.

Is this a double standard? Yes, of course it is, but that isn't the point. Julian Bond's opinions about Bush are none of the government's business, including when he states them in public, any more than are the vitriolic jeremiads emanating from church pulpits. The government has no right to define an organization's nature. The Reagan administration tried to revoke the tax-exempt status of the vile Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon in 1983, despite accepting that it was a religious institution. The Spartacist League filed an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief on behalf of Moon's church because the government's case threatened the right of institutions—including religious organizations, political parties and trade unions—to establish themselves and control money entrusted to them (see "IRS Case Threatens Left," *WV* No. 337, 9 September 1983).

The witchhunt against the NAACP seeks to stifle any dissent within a black population already reeling from decades of attacks. It underscores the need for black people, workers, women and all the oppressed to struggle against the assaults of the government and the capitalist class it serves. But to fight back, the working class and the oppressed should look not to the capitalist Democratic Party, the other party of war and racism, but to their own strength, mobilized independently and in their own interests.■

AP

NAACP chairman Julian Bond speaks to Philadelphia convention, July 11.

They will recognize that insofar as the Iraqi insurgent groups are battling the American forces, they are engaged in a just struggle against colonial oppression. To recognize that is not to deny the reactionary politics of the Islamic fundamentalists or Arab nationalists that predominate in the Iraqi insurgencies.

There are many important differences between the Vietnam War and the occupation of Iraq. In South Vietnam, American imperialism was seeking to suppress not only a national liberation struggle but also a social revolution militarily supported by North Vietnam, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. Nonetheless, the history of the Vietnam War is relevant to the questions raised by Allan G.

During the first few years of the war, antiwar opposition in the U.S. was limited to a small minority of leftists and some pacifistic liberals. However, as the war dragged on with mounting U.S. casualties and no end in sight, antiwar sentiment spread to many Americans who earlier had supported the war as part of the worldwide battle against Communism. A major turning point was the 1968 Tet Offensive by the North Vietnamese which exploded the official line that the U.S. was winning the war—i.e., increasing American deaths produced a moral shakeup among the population at home over the nature of the war. Many soldiers in Vietnam opposed the war, and some were even won to the cause of the Vietnamese fighters. Additionally, the U.S. itself was in the middle of an enormous social polarization, primarily created by the civil rights movement and the struggles for black equality. In this context, it was not an accident that black soldiers in particular were the ones most hostile to the Vietnam War.

Today, despite Bush's winning reelection, there is substantial opposition to the Iraq occupation, including among large sectors of the working class (particularly black and minority workers whose children are disproportionately enlisted in the military). But the labor tops have turned opposition to the war among workers away from any form of class-struggle actions and into pathetic—and ultimately futile—appeals to get the warmongering capitalist Democrat Kerry elected. In his 1938 piece, "Learn to Think," Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky outlined the sort of policies that the international proletariat must fight for in opposition to imperialist depredation:

> "Let us assume that rebellion breaks out tomorrow in the French colony of Algeria under the banner of national independence and that the Italian government, motivated by its own imperialist interests, prepares to send weapons to the rebels. What should the attitude of the Italian workers be in this case?... Should the Italian workers prevent the shipping of arms to the Algerians?... Even if a general maritime strike broke out in fascist Italy at the same time, even in this event the strikers should make an exception in favor of those ships carrying aid to the colonial slaves in revolt; otherwise they would be no more than wretched trade unionists—not proletarian revolutionists. "At the same time, the French maritime workers, even though not faced with any strike whatsoever, would be compelled to exert every effort to block the shipment of ammunition intended for use against the rebels. Only such a policy on the part of the Italian and French workers constitutes the policy of revolutionary internationalism."

George Butler

Demonstration of antiwar Vietnam veterans in Washington, D.C., April 1971.

Regarding the slogan, "turn the guns the other way" (i.e., "against *one's own* bourgeoisie," as Lenin put it), it is not an accident that such slogans were first raised by revolutionaries like Lenin around the time of World War I. Interimperialist wars like World War I—where Marxists do not side with any of the belligerent countries—generally have a different reality from a colonial war (like the Iraq war).

The slaughter of World War I produced not only horror and revulsion among the soldiers from *all* the belligerent countries, but provided a real basis to win them over to the cause of socialism. By the early autumn of 1917, for example, some *2 million soldiers* in the Russian army deserted. Another country that experienced large-scale mutinies was France (a good movie on the French military during World War I is the late Stanley Kubrick's 1957 film *Paths of Glory*). In Germany, the 1918-19 working-class upheaval was sparked by a rebellion by German sailors in the northern town of Kiel who were ordered out into a suicidal combat mission even though it was understood that the war was over, and Germany was about to surrender (see, for example, *Failure of a Revolution: Germany 1918-19* by Sebastian Haffner). In fact, Karl Liebknecht's famous slogan, "The main enemy is at home," was initially directed toward soldiers in opposition to their own ruling class.

Moreover, that slogan, as well as slogans like "turn the guns the other way," was consciously directed to all the soldiers of *all* the belligerent countries. This was in order to underline that the war was predatory and imperialist on all sides—and, therefore, Marxists were revolutionary defeatist toward all sides. In contrast, the Iraq war was predatory and imperialist on the side of the U.S., but just and defensive on the side of Iraq—and, therefore, Marxists were revolutionary defensists on the side of Iraq.

The party that best understood the situation around World War I was the Bolshevik Party. It was able to take the horror produced by the war and push it in the direction of socialist revolution. Russian soldiers won to the Bolshevik cause played a key role in the revolution and the difficult and bloody struggle to defend it against counterrevolution.

While the war and occupation in Iraq have produced horrific atrocities, they have all been one-sided. American soldiers have not suffered anything like the "shock and awe" campaign inflicted on Iraq; they have not been rounded up en masse and thrown into torture chambers like Abu Ghraib; they do not have to fight a military power that is qualitatively superior in every way. Meanwhile, American civilians, unlike their Iraqi counterparts, have not had to fear an invasion of their country by Iraq, the destruction of their homes and economic infrastructure, a full-scale foreign occupation with its crimes. They have not had to live through the kinds of atrocities committed by U.S. troops in cities like Falluja and Najaf, which can often resemble those committed in Abu Ghraib.

Since the launching of the Iraq war in March 2003, the U.S. has lost some 1,100 troops. The fact that this is producing a sense of shock not only among the population but, more importantly, among the military elite, is revealing about the mindset of the American military. The job of a soldier is to kill and *to be killed*. The job of a cop is to kill and *not* to be killed. That the U.S. military brass feels jolted by 1,100 dead troops in over a year of war and occupation shows that they think they can invade, conquer and occupy whole countries without suffering any consequence; it reveals a mentality that increasingly resembles that of a cop rather than a soldier.■

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club Forum

For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Greensboro Massacre 1979: We Will Not Forget!

Saturday, November 20, 5 p.m.
University of Chicago, Reynolds Club
South Lounge, 2nd Floor, 5706 South University Ave.

CHICAGO

For more information: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail spartacist@iname.com

A Very Successful *Workers Vanguard* Subscription Drive

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

WV Photo

Congratulations to all those who participated in the 2004 *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive! Members and sympathizers of the Spartacist League spent six weeks, from late August through early October, in an intensive campaign to widen the readership of our press among students and working people. A measure of our success in this campaign is the fact that we exceeded our quota of 2,950 points with a total of 3,417½ points, that is, 116 percent of our goal. This represents more than 1,500 subscriptions to *Workers Vanguard*, 125 subscriptions to *Espartaco* (the newspaper of the ICL's Mexican section, the Grupo Espartaquista de México) and 262 subscriptions to the international press of other ICL sections. We welcome our new subscribers.

This year comrades did a remarkable job, not only in traveling far and wide to find new readers and reconnect with subscribers and friends of the organization, but also in selling subscriptions in the course of participating in protests, strikes and a great range of political events locally. The lead-up to the intensely polarizing presidential election generated a heightened level of political activity as well as greater interest in our Marxist literature. This could be seen from the mass protests against the Republican National Convention at the beginning of the subscription drive, at which our New York and Boston comrades intervened, selling over 30 subscriptions, to the well-attended forums we held in various locals on our opposition to *both* capitalist parties and the need to build a revolutionary workers party that fights for socialist revolution.

Several strikes and trade-union rallies that we intersected during the subscription drive helped us to concretize for our readers our perspective centered on working-class struggle. The Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club mobilized students and others to do strike-support work in solidarity with striking and locked-out hotel workers in San Francisco, including organizing a united-front rally at the City College of San Francisco (see "Victory to the San Francisco Hotel Workers Strike!" *WV* No. 834, 15 October). Meanwhile, the New York local was able to sell subscriptions to striking airport hotel workers and to striking casino workers in Atlantic City, reporting back to *WV* on these struggles.

WV served as a tool for intersecting youthful activists and workers in struggle and introducing them to a Marxist program. *WV* is not just a source of commentary on events, but the voice of a revolutionary organization that intervenes in class and social struggles here and internationally. As uncompromising Marxists we seek to produce a hard-hitting and controversial newspaper that tells the truth squarely as we see it. Our press is also a journal of record for our history as an organization, which we make available through our bound volumes of *WV*, which go back to its inception in 1971.

Our annual subscription drive is one of our most important campaigns. Subscriptions enable us to multiply many-fold our party's reach around the country, to places we're not present and to populations we can't get to all the time. A subscription means that we can engage a reader over a whole year—the paper can speak to people as they live through events in the world. Also especially important are re-subscriptions and we strive to maintain and expand the longtime readership that we have developed around the country.

Subscribers Attracted to Marxist Worldview

Comrades widely reported greater interest and curiosity about Marxism among certain layers of students during the subscription drive. We met students who were reading Marx as part of their classes or out of personal interest—a new subscriber in Ann Arbor was carrying a copy of the *Communist Manifesto* in her purse when she met us. However, for a generation of youth that has been told communism is a failed experiment, Marxism is mostly an abstract theory. We motivated subscriptions by explaining that *WV applies* Marxism as a concrete guide to action in the fight against exploitation and oppression.

SYC comrades also reported that in many cases youth who got subscriptions didn't know much about Marxism but were interested in getting a broader perspective on events in the world. Some youth we intersected had participated in protests against the Iraq war and occupation. Others were drawn to our defense of the Palestinian people. Our literature on the struggle to defend the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution, including our latest pamphlet in Chinese, drew a lot of interest from Chinese students. We also held forums on China during the subscription drive (see page 6, "The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today").

Going into the subscription drive, we anticipated that many youth and workers desperate to get the vicious Bush administration out of the White House would find our position of opposition to both the Republicans and Democrats controversial. This was reflected in the angry reactions our slogans elicited from many participants in the protests against the Republican National Convention in New York City.

While a small but real portion of those who sought out subscriptions to *WV* this year had already decided that it wasn't worth voting for any of the major candidates, most youth and workers who subscribed were planning to vote for Kerry. As Bay Area comrades put it: "Disgust with the Democrats or actively pursuing socialist politics per se weren't driving them to buy subs (most of them are 'anybody but Bush'), but they were interested in getting our alternative, anti-capitalist take on the elections."

Chicago comrades who traveled to the University of Wisconsin-Madison told a typical story: "Two women holding Kerry flags and distributing election paraphernalia did stop by the table to explain how they do not like Kerry, that socialist ideas were good but they needed to be doing what they are doing right now because Bush cannot get four more years." Comrades traveling in North Carolina noted: "Far from encountering anybody-but-Bush hysteria, we found something more akin to anybody-but-Bush despair. At both the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University we easily sold subscriptions to the main 'Democrats for Kerry' campus activists."

Most subscribers were attracted primarily to our fight for a revolutionary transformation of society which will eradicate exploitation, racism, war and oppression, yet in the short term they still saw voting for Kerry as the best that could be done right now. A report from the New York local captured this:

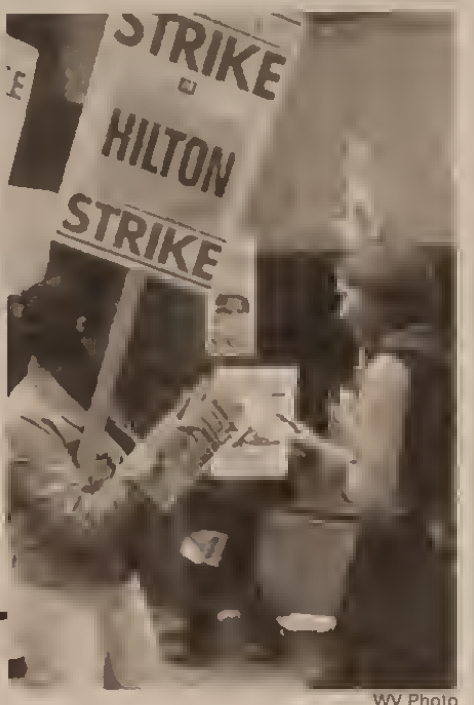
> "The discussions have predictably focused on the elections and the 'anybody but Bush' sentiment prevalent, though people have also subscribed because we offer an alternative, as unrealistic as it might seem in the immediate period. The question posed by the perspective of a workers party is what would such a party actually do? And since there is not enough time to build one right now, it's hard for people to see past November."

Fight Against Racial Oppression Draws New Readers

Another striking aspect of this year's subscription drive was the great interest in our emphasis on the fight for black liberation. It seems the less that the racial oppression of black people is spoken about or even recognized by the bourgeois media and politicians, the more people thirst for our literature on the subject. This was especially true throughout the South, where many black students and workers were drawn to our signs reading "Finish the Civil War!" and "Down With the Confederate Flag of Slavery!"

In North Carolina, the most popular "giveaway" with a subscription among both black and white students was our *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 "What Strategy for Black Liberation? Trotskyism vs. Black Nationalism," and campus black organizations bought subscriptions to our press. At the College of Charleston in

continued on page 11



WV Photo

Above: Some of the most popular "giveaways" during the subscription drive. Right: Spartacists distribute literature to striking San Francisco hotel workers.

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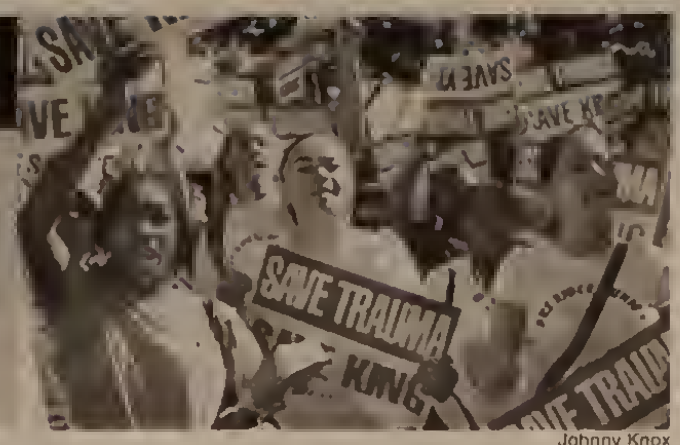
L.A. Bosses Take Ax to King/Drew Medical Center



Johnny Knox

SEIU Local 660 members and community activists protest threatened closure of King/Drew trauma unit, September 21.

LOS ANGELES—The majority Democrat Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted on September 13 to shut the trauma unit at the historic Martin Luther King Jr./Charles E. Drew Medical Center, as threats loom to close the entire hospital. King/Drew is the main trauma center for the impoverished, predominantly black and Latino Watts/South-Central/Compton triangle, which has one of the highest rates of uninsured in the country. King/Drew is also one of the few teaching hospitals where substantial numbers of black doctors have been trained. Closure of the hospital's trauma unit is subject to final approval by the L.A. county supervisors after a public hearing on November 15. Meanwhile, the national Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has voted to begin the process of revoking King/Drew's accreditation, and federal regulators have threatened to cut off $200 million in funding unless the county brings in outside "turnaround" experts to "restructure" the hospital, which they have now done.

King/Drew is a legacy of the black uprisings of the 1960s. Black people suffering under the system of entrenched, systematic racial oppression that defines American capitalism erupted in ghetto uprisings throughout the country, including in Watts. They rebelled against chronic unemployment and poverty, rampant racist discrimination and segregation, dilapidated schools and murderous police repression. In the aftermath, forced to recognize the Watts area's grossly inadequate public health care, and hoping to stave off further black unrest, the L.A. city rulers thought it wise to inject a little more capital investment in the area for the construction of a desperately needed public hospital—King/Drew.

King/Drew trauma center, one of the nation's busiest, handled 2,150 patients last year, 45 percent of whom suffered penetrating wounds, such as gunshots and knife wounds. This is in addition to the 45,000 people the King/Drew emergency room treats every year! This area of South Central has the highest homicide rate in the county, and its ghettos and barrios are a central target of the LAPD and County Sheriffs' unending war on blacks and immigrant poor, all in the name of the "war on drugs." In fact, the U.S. Department of Defense has sent military doctors to train in the King/Drew trauma center so that they will be better prepared for the war zones they are sent to! U.S. imperialism's wars of depredation abroad, such as the current brutal occupation of Iraq, are the international extension of the American bourgeoisie's war on workers and the oppressed here at home.

Today, the U.S. crisis in health care has reached devastating proportions. Some 44 million Americans have no health insurance at all—and the numbers are increasing. As the capitalists attempt to shift more of the costs of health care onto the backs of workers, the number of workers covered by employer-provided health insurance dropped by three million from the years 2001 to 2002. Meanwhile, the bloody hand of the federal government stands out as a major influence in dismantling health facilities. The federal agency that oversees the nation's Medicare and Medicaid programs has recently conducted a number of surprise inspections of public hospitals, threatening to cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in funding when deficiencies have been found.

This has not only affected King/Drew in Los Angeles, but also Northern California's Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC), where the trauma center at Highland Hospital in largely black and immigrant Oakland is the only such facility serving the northern part of Alameda county. Highland's ER sees about 75,000 patients a year, many of whom are poor and lack health insurance. In August, about 1,000 workers walked off the job for one day at all of the medical center's facilities. The strikers, members of three SEIU locals, were outraged by the medical center trustees' announcement in April of plans to cut 10 percent of the workforce.

The federal government has been very active not only in threatening the major funding for public hospitals, but in terrorizing the poor who might use the minimal social services that still exist. In July, *armed federal agents* conducted roundups of disabled welfare recipients at gunpoint in Los Angeles—simply on misdemeanor charges of "cheating" the government out of a monthly welfare payment! Many of those arrested had already reached some agreement with the Social Security Administration. Of the 21 people arrested, one was blind and in a wheelchair; several were schizophrenic. *All 21 were black!*

Los Angeles: "Ground Zero" in Health Care Crisis

For years now, Los Angeles has been referred to as "ground zero" in the nation's profit-driven health care crisis. Conservative estimates, which do not count the underinsured, are that one-third of California's 6.3 million uninsured live in the greater L.A. area, and the number is growing rapidly. The already overburdened, underfunded and understaffed county hospitals and clinics are the only resort for the expanding numbers of uninsured, most of whom are workers and impoverished blacks, Latinos and immigrants in the ghettos and barrios. However, the ruthless politicians, overwhelmingly Democrat, who govern the L.A. region on behalf of the capitalist exploiters have consistently cut public health care budgets to the bone for decades, including the closure of dozens of county ERs, trauma units, hospitals and clinics.

Since the 1980s, 18 emergency rooms in L.A. County have been shut down, six of them in just the past year. Twenty years ago, there were 23 trauma units in the county that cared for those with life-threatening injuries; today there are only 13. In addition, 16 county clinics were closed in 2002 to "save costs." As the remaining ERs fill up, paramedics must drive wounded patients farther to find care, with every extra minute threatening lives. The racist rulers of this decaying capitalist system have made it clear that in their eyes, the poor and the uninsured are a surplus population for whom there is no need to provide health care. The bourgeoisie's systematic dismantling of what little public health care there is amounts to racist murder of the ghetto black and Latino poor.

Since the 1978 passage of California Proposition 13, which froze property taxes on which schools and county health systems depend, it's estimated that California has lost $100 billion in tax revenue. The "tax revolt" movement behind Prop. 13 was a white, middle-class backlash against government programs viewed as especially benefiting the black and Latino poor. The effects of Prop. 13 have now coincided with a federal drive to gut welfare and other programs for the poor, resulting in a bloody budget ax being taken to public health services in Los Angeles by county officials.

The county sparked a furor last year when it announced plans to trim King/Drew expenditures by 16 percent over a three-year period. King/Drew has always lacked modern medical equipment and has always had too few registered nurses, which also means mistakes tend to get made more often. Then, when things go wrong, the racist rulers claim that they have to close parts of the hospital for "patient safety"; thus the proposal to close the "costly" trauma center, a part of King/Drew which is actually known for its excellent track record, claiming that funding and nurse staffing will be transferred to other areas of the hospital where they are needed, and where there have been "lapses in patient care." The hospital managers and county and federal officials are attempting to scapegoat the "neglectful" nursing staff for the hospital's problems, which are clearly the result of purposeful underfunding and understaffing. Tammy Green, who delivered three children at King/Drew, captured the essence of the situation when she said that King/Drew was allowed to fall into such a state because "we're black and we're poor." "I blame the whole system," she said (*Los Angeles Times*, 16 September).

Since January of this year, nurse staffing in L.A. County hospitals has been woefully below California's new standards. "Every single day our patients are in danger. The understaffing keeps getting worse," says Joel Solis, a registered nurse at Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center. "Less time for patients means increased risk" (SEIU Local 660 Web site). In order to raise staffing levels to meet the California state standards put into effect in January of this year, the county would have to fill 450 already-vacant positions and hire an additional 650 RNs for a total of over 1,100 new direct-care nurses. Yet over the past year and a half, L.A. County has lost 129 more nurses than it has hired.

Grace Corse, a registered nurse at County-USC Medical Center knows why. "We're losing nurses because the County salaries are too low and the stress level is so high," she says (SEIU Local 660 Web site). L.A. County's five public hospitals are more than 25 percent short of the number of nurses they need to fully comply with state laws. RNs at the county's five hospitals, members of the massive SEIU Local 660, have been working without a contract since 30 September 2003. This yearlong contract dispute between the union and management has been particularly bitter at County-USC Medical Center. Arrogantly blaming overworked nurses for the effects of the county's murderous cuts, management accuses nurses of endangering lives by refusing to take on additional patients. Catherine Lefkowitz, a pediatric nurse at County-USC, said, "They should hire more nurses. They're always staffing to the bottom line" (*Los Angeles Times*, 26 October). Lefkowitz and her fellow nurses shut down a ward in early October. In the last few months, more than 160 county nurses have refused to take on more patients than state law allows, with support of union representatives who at times have shown up at the hospital wards to support them.

Outrageously, in at least three cases since September, managers called police to eject Local 660 union representatives from the wards! Since then, about 20 nurses have been suspended for their defiance. In July, the county won a restraining order to halt sick-outs by nurses protesting the lack of a contract. The union must defend itself and every one of its members! Hospital workers' battles for decent working conditions are also battles for decent health care for their patients, and both goals are in the interest of the entire working class. Attacks by the hospital management and government bosses must be met with massive class-struggle action by all county workers! The thousands of unionized county health care workers should be mobilized in a class-struggle fight for decent public medicine!

Mobilize Labor's Power in Defense of Public Health Care

The multiracial working class has shown its willingness to fight the racist rulers' attacks on health care. In the last few years, health care has been a

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Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!

AP

Reuters

Beijing, May 1989: Mass student protests in Tiananmen Square drew detachments of workers (right).

The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today

We print below, slightly edited for publication, the first part of an October 9 forum in Oakland, California, by Spartacist League spokesman Keith Markin.

One of the most hotly debated subjects throughout the world, especially in China, is whether China is capitalist or socialist. The significance of the Tiananmen uprising in

PART ONE

the spring of 1989 is another subject of debate in China. What is going to happen there? One thing is certain: it's not very stable. There's a book, appropriately entitled *One China, Many Paths*, which has contributions from the intelligentsia within China, that deals with these questions. I'll refer to articles from this book.

China's economy continues to grow. It has emerged as the number one steel producer in the world. At the same time, there is an increasing gap of social inequality exceeded by only a few countries. While there are some people that can buy a $30,000 car with cash, many more live in abject poverty, especially in the countryside and in the west of China. The wealthy living on the east and southern coasts have access to the most modern comforts.

The lie of building "socialism with Chinese characteristics" has led to China losing 15 million manufacturing jobs in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) between 1995 and 2002. Prostitution is skyrocketing, and female infanticide is rampant in the countryside. There are over 100 million people living on less than $106 per year. The United States has about 40 percent more acreage under cultivation than China, yet the Chinese agricultural labor force is 100 times larger than that of the U.S. And the U.S. has over six times as many tractors as China. These dire conditions have forced as many as 130 million rural Chinese to become migrant laborers in search of work on the eastern and southern coasts.

World Journal

Workers employed by Computime, a Hong-Kong-mainland joint-venture company, protest harsh working conditions and low pay outside factory in Shenzhen, October.

The workers no longer have their "iron rice bowl," which guaranteed a job and benefits for workers in SOEs. A journalist traveling in the northeast of China, where millions of workers have been laid off, explained that in the past an "average worker could—just based on a letter of introduction, something equivalent to current credit card or privileged position in these times—get excellent treatment at a hospital." He says, "This is something of a legend to young people [in China] who do not know their history."

After crushing the Tiananmen uprising in 1989, the Stalinist regime waited a few years before they began more aggressive market policies, such as the increase in free-trade zones, where a section of the Stalinist bureaucracy functions as labor contractors for the imperialists and offshore bourgeoisie. But the proletariat and peasantry have been far from silent. It is reported by the police that from 1993 to 1999 there was an increase of protests from approximately 8,500 per year to 32,000. According to unofficial Chinese reports, the number of public protests has probably risen each of the last three years.

In the spring of 2002, thousands of workers from the northeast provinces protested against the massive layoffs and the failure to receive back pay and pensions. This area used to be the industrial heartland of China; it has become a rust bowl. During the protests, banners proclaimed such slogans as "The army of industrial workers wants to live!" and "It is a crime to embezzle pensions!"

The spectre of the Tiananmen uprising looms large. This has led the ruling Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao regime to adopt a more "populist" style than the technocratic Jiang Zemin regime which preceded it. The central government has since promised to invest in the northeast region to appease the workers. What happens in China is not a foregone conclusion. It will be determined through social struggle.

Peter Taaffe, leader of the Socialist Party, a left group centered in Britain, commented on the 16th Chinese Communist Party Congress two years ago: "China is on the road to complete capitalist restoration, but the ruling clique are attempting to do this gradually and by maintaining their repressive authoritarian grip" (*Socialist*, 22 November 2002). Maoists and neo-Maoists outside China—the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) is a good example—believe that China is capitalist, and has been for some time.

Neo-Maoists *within* the bureaucracy want to reform the bureaucracy by changing its policies. They are opposed to the "market socialist" economy, though they believe China is still "socialist." The Chinese "New Left" is heterogeneous. Most support the market economy, but they are critical of the ramifications of the market: corruption, the gap between rich and poor, etc. They consider themselves part of the anti-globalization movement. Wang Hui, a prominent spokesman of the Chinese "New Left," says that after Tiananmen China "has completely conformed to the dictates of capital and the activities of the market." We Trotskyists sharply disagree with all of these characterizations of China and the conclusions drawn by the Chinese "New Left."

I want to clarify three points today: first, in Marxist terminology, China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state because the core of the economy is based on collectivized property. This is the basis for the International Communist League's unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. Second, there is a privileged bureaucratic caste that politically rules the workers state. The bureaucracy's policies of "market socialism" are paving the way for either capitalist restoration or for a new revolutionary explosion. What happened during the Tiananmen uprising, as well as the current class struggle in China, shows the contradictions of the deformed workers state and the dual character of the bureaucracy. And third, the historical task of the Chinese proletariat is to build a revolutionary party—not its Stalinist or Maoist perversion. A revolutionary party is necessary to lead workers, peasants and the oppressed to defend the gains of the 1949 Revolution through a proletarian political revolution that establishes workers democracy. The key

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

political question for such a party is to break the Chinese proletariat from the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" and win them to an internationalist, proletarian perspective. For those new to Marxism, I will explain just what all this means.

What Is Marxism?

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist tendency. We are based on the politics of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. The debates in China are framed by a false identity of Maoism with Marxism.

In order to understand what I'll be talking about and how we are different from the other political tendencies, I want to explain some basics about Marxism. First of all, Marxism is a science. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "physics" as a science that deals with matter and energy and their interactions. Marxism is the science of changing the world through international proletarian revolution. It deals with the relationship of class forces in the class struggle and the political consciousness of the international proletariat. The starting point for a Marxist is the understanding that the interests of the capitalists and of the proletariat are irreconcilable.

I've already jumped the gun. You're asking: What's a class? I want to quote Leon Trotsky. He, along with Lenin, led the Russian Revolution, which took proletarian revolution out of the realm of theory and gave it reality. In *The Class Nature of the Soviet State*, Trotsky explains just what a class is and why the Chinese bureaucracy is not a class (he was referring to the former Soviet Union):

> "The *class* has an exceptionally important and, moreover, a scientifically restricted meaning to a Marxist. A class is defined not by its participation in the distribution of the national income alone, but by its independent role in the general structure of the economy and by its independent roots in the economic foundation of society. Each class (the feudal nobility, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalist bourgeoisie and the proletariat) works out its own special forms of property. The bureaucracy lacks all these social traits. It has no independent position in the process of production and distribution. It has no independent property roots. Its functions relate basically to the political technique of class rule. The existence of a bureaucracy, in all its variety of forms and differences in specific weight, characterizes *every* class regime. Its power is of a reflected character. The bureaucracy is indissolubly bound up with a ruling economic class, feeding itself upon the social roots of the latter, maintaining itself and falling together with it."

Another important Marxist term is the state. A state consists of armed people and institutions that defend particular types of property. A capitalist state defends private ownership over factories, natural resources and banks (called the means of production). Capitalist production is based on what is most profitable for the private capitalist. A workers state defends collectivized property in the means of production. Production is based on what is actually needed by society. Another name for a workers state is the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Through international proletarian revolution, the system of private ownership of the means of production is replaced by a system of collective ownership of the means of production. A socialist revolution must establish a workers state to defend collectivized property against both the indigenous capitalists and imperialism. It is a step toward the international revolution. In order to remove the social rule of the working class, a social counterrevolution is necessary to re-establish a capitalist state, the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Capitalist production played a very important role in human history. It led to the development of modern sciences and technology. Humanity has the means to feed the world, but the capitalists and their system of production, which breeds imperialist wars, are obstacles that must be gotten rid of. Marxism seeks to resolve the problem of scarcity concerning food, clothing and shelter in the world through international proletarian revolution. Socialism is a classless, egalitarian, international economic system based on material abundance. Under a socialist system the problem of scarcity in the world can be resolved.

Both the 1949 Chinese Revolution and the Russian Revolution established collectivized property in the means of production and workers states to defend this type of property. The collectivized economy in the Soviet Union and China laid the basis for a leap in social progress, in particular for women. In China, the barbaric practice of foot-binding, which symbolized women's miserable status, was banned. But there was a qualitative difference between the two revolutions. The Russian Revolution of October 1917 was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, which won the support of the poor peasants, and saw the seizure of state power as the first step toward world socialist revolution. The Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Mao. The proletariat did not struggle in its own right for power in China.

The 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime. Mao was a Chinese Stalin: the political regime of the Chinese workers state was modeled on that of Stalin, who represented the privileged bureaucracy in the Soviet Union that usurped political power from the proletariat in 1923-24.

The bureaucracy derives all its privileges by sitting on top of the collectivized economy, like a parasite. This is the basis of the contradictory character of what we describe as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea are all deformed workers states. Because there was workers democracy in the Soviet Union before the Stalinist bureaucracy usurped political power in 1923-24, we characterized the Soviet Union as a "degenerated" rather than a "deformed" workers state. You see, the Bolshevik Party won a majority in the workers and soldiers soviets in 1917. There has never been workers democracy in China, Cuba, North Korea or Vietnam.

The bureaucracy rules in the name of the working class because all its privileges are derived from the collectivized property of the working class. It defends the workers state insofar as it can protect its privileged position atop the workers state. So it defends the workers state by its *own* methods.

The bureaucracy is opposed to the perspective of workers revolution internationally. The Stalinist bureaucrats adopted the nationalist dogma that socialism—an international, classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. This means the bureaucracy prefers to accommodate world imperialism in the hope of maintaining the status quo, so that they can continue to feed off the workers state. In order to replace the political rule of the bureaucracy and change the political form of a workers state to workers democracy, a proletarian political revolution is necessary, not a social revolution. The economic foundations of the state remain the same.

WV Photo

Del Spiegel

1979: Spartacists demonstrate at Chinese Mission in New York City against Chinese government's invasion of Vietnam which was a shameful illustration of U.S.-China anti-Soviet axis.

Another significant difference between the Russian and Chinese Revolutions is that the Russian bourgeoisie was destroyed as a class; the Chinese bourgeoisie wasn't. The offshore bourgeoisie in Taiwan and Hong Kong, along with the imperialists, are the main forces for counterrevolution in China, and the Stalinist bureaucracy strengthens these forces.

In our article "China: Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!" (*WV* Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December 2003), which is now out in Chinese, we explain why China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state. It is the core collectivized elements of the economy that continue to be dominant, though not in a stable, coherent manner. The private (including foreign-owned) sector consists for the most part of factories producing light manufactures by labor-intensive methods. Heavy industry, the high-tech sectors and modern armaments production are overwhelmingly concentrated in state-owned enterprises. It is these enterprises that have enabled China to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles to ward off the American imperialists' threat of a nuclear first strike. Also, all major banks in China are state owned. Government control of the financial system has been key to maintaining and expanding production in state-owned industry and to the overall expansion of the state sector. The Beijing bureaucracy's abandonment of the strict state monopoly of foreign trade serves to facilitate Wall Street's plans for counterrevolution. It is precisely these core collectivist elements of China's economy that the forces of world imperialism want to eliminate and dismantle.

The ICL fights for unconditional military defense of all the deformed workers states against imperialism and internal capitalist counterrevolution because these states are based on collectivized property. That means we don't pose as a condition for defense that the Stalinist bureaucracy be overthrown before we will defend China. Why is this so important here in the U.S. and other capitalist countries in the world? If the proletariat of the U.S., Japan and Germany don't understand the historic significance of the gains of the Chinese Revolution, like the collectivized economy, then they will never understand the importance of making a revolution against their "own" bourgeoisie. We are for the revolutionary reunification of Taiwan with China: this means socialist revolution in Taiwan, expropriating the bourgeoisie in Hong Kong, and proletarian political revolution on the mainland.

Tiananmen, Incipient Proletarian Political Revolution

First, the background—three key events in China shaped the Tiananmen uprising: the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), China's anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism, and the market reforms begun in 1978.

Mao's Cultural Revolution is important because it significantly shaped the political consciousness of Chinese workers, peasants, students and intellectuals through the 1980s. Essentially it was a fight between two wings of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Maoists had to purge the conservative wing of the bureaucracy (led by Liu Shao-chi and Deng Xiaoping), who had led China during its

continued on page 13

We Trotskyists opposed repression by Stalinist regime against incipient political revolution in 1989; Workers World Party hailed the bloody suppression, calling the uprising "counter-revolutionary."

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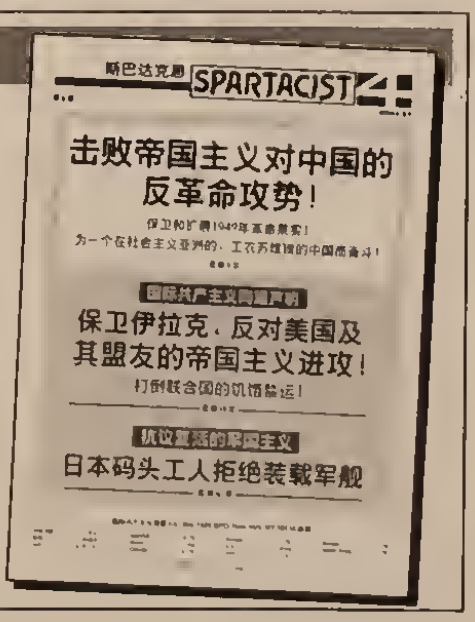

For Separation of Religion and State

Canada: No to Ontario's "*Sharia* Courts"!

The article below was published in Spartacist Canada *No. 142 (Fall 2004), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/ Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

After a campaign of more than a decade by the Canadian Society of Muslims, in late 2003 the Ontario government authorized Islamic *sharia* tribunals to function under existing arbitration laws. Under the 1991 Arbitration Act, tribunal decisions will be binding and will be upheld by Ontario courts unless coercion is shown. The new *sharia* courts are to deal with family law—marriage, divorce, inheritance—where women's subjugation is most brutally enforced. This is an outrage that will deepen the oppression and isolation of Muslim women. As revolutionary Marxists, atheists and fighters for women's liberation, we are unalterably opposed to the new *sharia* courts.

We are against all intrusion of religion into an already deeply unjust legal system that exists to defend capitalist private property and is driven by Christian thirst for vengeance and punishment. Religion ought to be a private matter in relation to the state. People should be free to practice their religion without the state persecution and religious bigotry which has spawned centuries of repression and bloodshed. But these religious tribunals are not a matter of private religious practice. Their rulings will have the force of law, making them part of the legal machinery of the capitalist state which in turn is to be the enforcer of religious obscurantism.

Sharia Law and Muslim Women

Sharia is the 1,300-year-old body of Muslim canon law that regulates every aspect of life. In Muslim personal law, women are inherently unequal (as in all organized religion); indeed they are considered less than fully human. Women may be beaten by their husbands, denied divorce, or divorced by the husband simply repeating three times, "I divorce you." Who can forget Amina Lawal, a Nigerian woman who narrowly escaped death by stoning for having a child out of wedlock?

Many of the opponents of Ontario's *sharia* plans are women who have fled Iran. Women in that "Islamic paradise" must cover themselves in the headscarf (*hijab*); they may not work in occupations that might compromise their "chastity"; and they can be stoned to death (and many have been) for having sexual relationships outside of marriage. In 2003 three young Iranian women—Nika, Mahdis and Mahnam Nahasati—were arrested, beaten with chains and sentenced to 120 lashes for the "crime" of allegedly having boyfriends. They had to overcome multiple racist hurdles thrown up by Canadian immigration authorities in order to escape Iran. Their brother Mohsen Mofidi was less fortunate—sentenced to 80 lashes, he died of injuries inflicted by the regime.

We especially oppose the Koranic strictures that dictate the seclusion of women. The head-to-toe *chador* (veil) is a walking prison, physically excluding women from society. It is not primarily a religious statement, but an embodiment of the submission of women to men, and the permanent, imposed affirmation of their inferior status. It represents the extension outside the home of the seclusion imposed on women by reactionary *sharia* law. We solidarize with the countless women who have sought to escape this tyranny, whether in the historically Muslim world or the imperialist centers.

Attempting to defuse protest, both the Ontario government and would-be Muslim jurists insist that participation in the tribunals is voluntary and that their decisions will be compatible with Canadian law. This would be a "Canadianized" and "watered-down *sharia*," according to Mumtaz Ali, "patron-in-chief" of the new Islamic Institute of Civil Justice which aims to run the tribunals.

The insistence that participation is "voluntary" is false. To its proponents, following *sharia* is obligatory, as Ali made clear in a 1995 interview: "Once the parties have agreed to be governed by Muslim PFL [Personal Family Law], then they will be committed to it by their prior consent.... [A] Muslim who would choose to opt out at this stage, for reasons of convenience would be guilty of a far greater crime than a mere breach of contract—and this could be tantamount to blasphemy-apostasy." Ali demands that women be veiled and that *purdah*—the enforced seclusion of women—is a necessity. He endorses a "learned author" who denounces "fornication" as a "hideous crime" and who upholds "the Shari'ah punishment" of 100 lashes because it "terrifies the whole population."

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women, which opposes the new tribunals, fears that women will simply be coerced into taking part. Similarly, the editor of the bulletin *Women in the Middle East*, Azam Kamguian, told a March 7 Toronto meeting:

> "Too many women from Muslim origin living in the west still live in Islamic and patriarchal environments where the man's word and pressure from the community is law. It will take a brave woman to defy her husband, and to refuse to have her dispute settled under Islamic law when her refusal could be equated with hostility to the religion and apostasy."

Women who try to break out of this web of religious oppression are shunned, ostracized and cut off from family and friends. If the capitalist courts enforce reactionary religious law, this can only worsen. While bourgeois justice is racist, anti-working-class and anti-woman, it does represent a social advance over reactionary pre-capitalist and even pre-feudal institutions such as religious trials by clerics of any persuasion.

Sharia Law and Anti-Muslim Backlash

The debate on *sharia* comes amid vastly heightened anti-Muslim racism—indeed, some of the opposition to the new tribunals is fueled by this backlash.

Nerio Musa

Muslim women in Toronto. Intensification of women's oppression, influence of religion is seen in increasing appearance of veiled women.

Down With Anti-Muslim Racism!

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, Islam was pronounced anathema, its adherents smeared as terrorists. On the streets, women have been humiliated, had their veils ripped off and denied jobs and services. Canadians of Near Eastern descent have been rounded up and detained; others were picked up abroad and thrown into jails in Syria and Egypt to be tortured.

It is noteworthy that for more than a decade Catholics, Orthodox Jews and Ismaili Muslims (who do not use *sharia*) have been using the Arbitration Act to resolve family-related and other legal disputes, without protest. In contrast, the proposal for *sharia* courts provoked an immediate outcry. There is a strain here of holier-than-thou "secularism" which is little more than a cover for anti-Muslim bigotry.

There are about 600,000 Muslims in Canada today; more than half live in Ontario. Imperialist subjugation and militarism, grinding poverty, wars of conquest and depredation from Somalia to Ethiopia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan: the bloody workings of imperialism have driven untold millions to flee their homes in search of a better life or simply to stay alive. But especially with the intense anti-Muslim backlash that erupted after September 11, attacks on Near Eastern and African immigrants here, as in the U.S. and Europe, have sharply increased as civil rights are shredded along with jobs and social services. Immigrants are the last hired and first fired, and this hits immigrant women hardest. Without access to jobs, services and language classes, many immigrant Muslim women live in intense isolation.

The growth of women's oppression and the influence of religion can be seen in the increasingly common appearance of the veil among women and young girls. For a minority, this is not only an expression of women's subordination, but a twisted kind of defiance of anti-Muslim racism. Less visible is the barbarism of female genital mutilation or the anguish of forced marriages. In fact, these things are aggravated by restrictive Canadian immigration laws.

At a Toronto June 26 anti-*sharia* meeting, a high school teacher reported that many teachers are seeing their young students suddenly spirited out of the country, only to return married to a much older man in order to secure him permanent resident status. A young girl's dowry is her citizenship. Similarly, immigrant women are trapped in abusive relationships if their status depends on their husbands. Attempts to flee or separate legally mean almost certain deportation. We demand full citizenship rights for anyone who makes it here. This is not only crucial to the lives of immigrants, but would undercut the basis for practices that are so detrimental to women.

Religious Bigotry and the Canadian State

Contrary to liberal mythology, Canada is not a secular state; separation of church and state is partial at best. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms invoked by some opponents of *sharia* states that "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law"—not exactly a statement of human liberation. Actually, Canada was founded on the destruction of the pre-existing aboriginal societies, the subjugation of the Québécois with the triumph of the British over the French on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and as a reactionary British redoubt against the American Revolution. To this day Parliament opens with prayers as the politicians seek guidance from the Christian God in their main endeavor—the business of rewarding their friends and robbing working people.

For much of Canada's long history of religious bigotry, anti-Catholic reaction was dominant, and it was always bound up with anti-French prejudice. The 19th century was marked by vicious campaigns and riots against impoverished Irish Catholic immigrants fomented by predominantly Protestant rulers. Orange Ontario was deeply anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic. Run by the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant Orange Order, Toronto of the 1920s and 1930s was known as the "Belfast of Canada." Here and on the Prairies, the Orange Order was heavily interpenetrated with the Ku Klux Klan terrorists whose specialty was anti-Catholic cross-burnings. After World War II, Catholic immigrants from southern European countries were the targets. Today Muslims (and Hindus and Sikhs) have largely displaced Catholics and Jews as the scapegoats of choice.

Mumtaz Ali thanks today's official government policy of multiculturalism for making *sharia* courts possible, declaring that "the Ontario government is the most enlightened in the world. This is the multiculturalism of my friend Pierre

Trudeau" (*Toronto Star*, 22 May). Multiculturalism was inaugurated in 1971 by Trudeau in part to corral "ethnic" votes for the Liberals and as a wedge against growing support for nationalism in Quebec. The carefully crafted hype is that it is an anti-racist liberal reform—an official expression of tolerance of all cultures. Right-wing racists inveigh against it for just that reason.

In reality, though, multiculturalism, which is designed to encourage the "voluntary" cultural and racial segregation of the population, has served to ghettoize immigrant communities. Hugely successful at buttressing the federal Liberals, with pork-barrel grants flowing to numerous cultural organizations, it has served to tie a layer of petty-bourgeois immigrant "community leaders" to the government's purse-strings. It has in turn been a powerful conservatizing force for policing immigrants and maintaining social peace.

By actively discouraging the integration of immigrant communities, the bourgeoisie has also helped to foster racism and chauvinism against non-white populations. For the ruling class, confronted with an increasingly multiracial working class, this policy has served to divide working people.

Capitalist immigration policy is always subject to the labour requirements of the economy. During periods of economic growth, the capitalists bring in workers from other countries as a source of cheap labour. In a downturn, they whip up racism against foreign-born workers, scapegoating them for the capitalist crisis. But the ruling class always manipulates racial and ethnic antagonisms among workers as a means of weakening their ability to struggle against the bosses' attacks. Struggling for class unity, workers must oppose all the racist anti-immigration laws and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. Immigrant workers are not helpless pawns, but form a vital part of capitalist production in this country—they represent a core of the social power which is key to successful labour struggle and the overturning of the capitalist order.

Religion, the Family and Women's Oppression

Karl Marx was right when he asserted that "*Man makes religion*, religion does not make man." He concluded:

> "The struggle against religion is therefore indirectly a fight against *the world* of which religion is the spiritual *aroma*.
>
> "*Religious* distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and also the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people."
>
> —"Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law" (1844)

Islam has no monopoly on religious savagery, and the subjugation of women is not unique to it. For years the Catholic church has used its power in the state-funded separate school system to poison children with anti-abortion and anti-gay bigotry. The religious lunatics who spent the 1990s trying to murder abortion doctors in Canada and the U.S. were certainly not Muslim. The Catholic church still does not allow divorce or contraception. In Jewish law the Beis Din system is a lot like *sharia*, intensely anti-woman. For example, women may not give testimony or sit in judgement of others; once married, women are essentially the property of their husbands.

Institutionalized religions are key to reinforcing women's oppression, but they are not its origin. The institution of the family—today fashioned to serve the needs of capitalist class rule—is the main source of women's oppression. In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, written in the late 19th century, Friedrich Engels explained that the monogamous patrilineal family "is based on the supremacy of the man, the express purpose being to produce children of undisputed paternity." The family is the vehicle for transmitting property from one generation to the next, and the mechanism for raising new generations of workers. Bourgeois family law is thus tightly bound up with defense of private property, and women's inequality is always reflected in the legal and social codes of every society.

The entire fabric of Muslim family law, the subordination of women through polygamy, the bride price, dowry, the veil—these are not simply the "bad ideas" of an evil caste of mullahs. In origin, they were a means of enforcing property rights and attendant mechanisms of social control in a pre-capitalist society.

In the eighth and ninth centuries, when Europe was in the Dark Ages, Muslim civilization was at its zenith. Islam gave us algebra, Arabic numbers; it preserved medical knowledge and many other key inventions. In the Spanish Inquisition of the 15th century the Muslims and Jews were driven out of Spain by the crown and Catholic church. Thousands upon thousands of books of mathematics, astronomy, medicine and poetry were burned.

Christianity and Judaism, in their many variants, also preach stifling moral codes meant to uphold the patriarchal family. But sections of Christianity and Judaism, also with roots in pre-capitalist society, had to conform with rising industrial capitalism and the bourgeois nation-states where they existed. The radical democratic principles of the Enlightenment were the ideological reflection of historic material advances over a backward, feudal society. But as a religion, Islam has not had to adapt, largely because it remains rooted in those parts of the world where imperialist penetration has reinforced social backwardness as a prop to its domination.

Capitalism came belatedly to these countries, with the European colonizers who manipulated and nurtured all that was backward and retrograde, while suppressing class struggle. And today among concentrations of immigrants in the Western imperialist countries, capitalist rule has reinforced anti-woman practices, from the barbarism of female genital mutilation to veiling to arranged marriages.

The Western imperialists fulminate against Islam. But it was these imperialist exploiters who fuelled the growth of political Islam over the last half century. In their drive to destroy the Soviet Union —the state that emerged from the victorious 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia—the imperialists allied with indigenous forces of social reaction to act as a bulwark against godless Communism and the Soviet Union, and to ensure the continued flow of superprofits.

Afghanistan is the clearest example. In the late 1970s when a modernizing Afghan government moved to implement modest reforms for women (lowering the bride price, instituting education) the tribal *mujahedin* erupted in insurrectionary violence. To protect its borders from the fundamentalist threat, already backed by the CIA, in late 1979 the Soviet Red Army entered Afghanistan at the invitation of the left-nationalist government in Kabul. The U.S. government spent billions to fund the *mujahedin*'s holy war against the Soviet Union in what was the biggest CIA operation in history. We declared "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan," and called to extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples, especially the terribly oppressed women.

Reuters

Members of Afghan women's militia rally in Kabul just before Soviet pullout in 1989.

But this was not the Soviet Union of Bolshevik leaders Lenin and Trotsky, but a degenerated workers state headed by a bureaucratic caste intent on conciliating the imperialist order. Criminally, instead of fighting to win, in 1989 the Soviets withdrew, paving the way for the victory of Washington's brutal religious fanatics—including the future Taliban—and opening the door to counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself. The Taliban, Osama bin Laden—this whole reactionary crew is literally the Frankenstein's monster created by the imperialists in their war on the Soviet Union.

Islam and the Left

The International Campaign Against Sharia Court in Canada (ICAS)—animated by the Worker-communist Party of Iran (WCPI)—is lobbying the government to remove family law from the Arbitration Act, which would remove the legal sanction for religion-based tribunals. But the website for this campaign (www.nosharia.com) has also published blatantly anti-immigrant, pro-imperialist poison without criticism or comment.

One such article, "Shari'a: A Threat to the Canadian Society" by Elka Enola of the Humanist Association of Toronto (HAT), projects a demented three-step scenario which culminates in a future where "Muslims now outnumber Christians, and the majority rule of democracy is turned on its head, as the majority Muslims make Shari'a the law of the land." Elsewhere, Enola raves that when leftists support "Palestinians against Israel," they are "siding with Political Islam" (*HAT Newsletter*, May/June 2004).

The ICAS website also features a statement, "Canada Attacked by Political Islam!", demanding that the racist Canadian government include as a condition on the Canadian immigration form that "the applicant will protect Canadian Secular Democracy." It further demands that the government require "all records of sermons and lectures in all religious gatherings, conferences, seminars etc [be submitted] to authority." This is not secularism but a loyalty oath that would ban some Muslim immigrants and other people as well, and a call on the government to directly police religion. It all reeks of the racist *Clash of Civilizations* garbage of reactionary writer Samuel Huntington, which pits a supposedly progressive "western civilization" against "backward Islam." It is the banner of imperialist "democracy" which has brought devastation to Afghanistan and now Iraq.

The racist Canadian ruling class simultaneously attacks Muslims as terrorists while nurturing the most repressive and conservative forces within the Muslim community. There is no real contradiction here: both are mechanisms for reinforcing the grip of capitalism through scapegoating and regimenting immigrant communities. Working people should oppose *sharia* courts and *all other* state-sanctioned religious interference in public institutions. The protests against *sharia* law must denounce Canada's brutally racist "justice" system and, especially, the government's war on immigrants.

While the Canadian left and feminists have been largely silent in the *sharia* debate, the Trotskyist League has intervened actively against the new *sharia* courts. We addressed the June 26 ICAS public meeting and we have publicized a planned protest against the *sharia* courts at the Ontario Legislature on September 8. Our letter urging left, gay/lesbian and other groups to mobilize for the protest made clear that opposition to *sharia* must be inseparable from opposition to the anti-Muslim racist backlash.

The abdication of much of the left reflects a longstanding division between opponents of the Islamic regime in Iran, and those who capitulate to it. Going back to the 1979 "Islamic Revolution"—a bloody disaster for women, workers and the left—many so-called leftists have willfully misidentified political Islam with anti-imperialism. For example, the International Socialists (I.S.) tailed the forces of Islamic reaction, running headlines like "The form—religion, The spirit—revolution" (*Workers Action*, February 1979).

In 1998, this line-up was reprised when the Trotskyist League, Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and others joined with the WCPI to drive out representatives of the murderously anti-woman Iranian government from a Toronto International Women's Day fair. Scandalously, the I.S. and others opposed this! More recently, the IWD feminists in Toronto have barred the WCPI from their meetings and from having display tables at IWD fairs—explicitly because these feminists viewed the WCPI's protest against the stoning, torture and imprisonment of women in Iran as a disruption that might "offend" Muslims.

Some leftists justify their reluctance to criticize Islamic reaction by pointing to the fact that the imperialists are waging a brutal "war on terrorism" through military conquest, occupations and the round-up of Near Eastern immigrants. Others push a form of "cultural relativism," a theoretical justification for accepting the horribly oppressive status quo in the Third World which actually mirrors the right-wing "clash of civilizations" cant. In fact, Islam has long been an invaluable tool for imperialist oppression and exploitation both of immigrants at home and neocolonial subjects abroad. That the government here is allowing Islamic *sharia* courts in the midst of an anti-Muslim backlash underscores that the fundamental divide in society is not between religions or nationalities, but between the classes.

The WCPI correctly opposes *sharia*

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Spartacist Canada

March 2002 Toronto protest in defense of Palestinians. Canadian Trotskyists protest attacks on immigrants in name of "war on terror."

Transit Workers Fight Religious Discrimination by NYCT

Kevin Harrington, a New York City train operator for 23 years, was called in by New York City Transit (NYCT) management last spring and told to immediately remove his turban, which, as a Sikh, he had been wearing every day since he started on the job. He was told that if he refused, he would be stripped of his seniority rights, which earned him the train operator job, and he restricted to a yard job out of public view. Harrington publicized this prejudiced treatment in the local press, and also got coverage in Britain and India. The union weighed in on his side. After being kept out of passenger service for three days, Harrington was allowed back to his regular job, though the NYCT continued to threaten to remove him from public service for wearing his turban.

At the end of August, NYCT promulgated a policy that headwear must be agency-issued "TA blue" and bear a company logo. In a New York 1 television interview, the legal director of the Sikh Coalition, Amardeep Singh, stated that the transit bosses "believe that they can engage in a broad policy of blatant discrimination against Sikh and Muslim employees and then after a year and a half shrug its shoulders and say 'We're sorry, let's shake hands on it, we might as well forget about it.' And that's not enough to address and redress a broad policy of possibly systematic discrimination." As Harrington told *Workers Vanguard*, what's to prevent the bosses from changing their minds again? The capitalists are always pushing to regiment the workforce as much as they can.

On September 29, the U.S. Justice Department announced a suit against NYCT's uniform policy. The Transport Workers Union (TWU) tops hailed this suit, as if John Ashcroft and his Homeland Security cohorts would defend the oppressed! Ashcroft has been on a non-stop campaign since September 11 to shred civil rights, targeting labor, black people, immigrants, Muslims and other religious minorities.

According to a May report by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, reported racist crimes against Muslims increased by 121 percent in 2003, and the largest percentage of complaints comes from government "anti-terror" activities based on the USA-Patriot Act. Deportations, detentions and FBI knocks on the door have left thousands of immigrants living in constant fear. The TWU tops have been pushing for more funds for "security," embracing the "war on terror," which is promoted by the Democrats as much as the Republicans. The bureaucrats' slavish loyalty to the capitalist parties and system serves to stifle working-class struggle against exploitation and oppression, and emboldens the capitalists to carry out further attacks on immigrants, blacks and labor.

In the reactionary climate created by the "war on terror," NYCT bosses have stepped up their attacks on the workforce. On September 8, a so-called "impartial arbitrator" upheld the firing of Carlos Blackman, an elected TWU shop chairman and dedicated fighter against unsafe working conditions who was framed up on phony "workplace violence" charges. Earlier this year, *WV* salesmen learned that a subway superintendent at the Coney Island overhaul shop harangued an assembly of mostly immigrant workers with the diktat, "No English, no overtime." A few years ago, a black worker at the East New York bus maintenance shop had to fight for his job after standing up to physical assault and racist slurs from a boss.

The bosses' racism and anti-immigrant bigotry are designed to perpetuate divisions within the workforce and prevent the working-class unity necessary to counter their attacks. As Harrington told *WV*, "I think what the Transit Authority is doing to minorities, either religious or racial or both, is an example of their apartheid mentality; that their way to solve their problems is to separate people by race, religion or whatever." The social power of the TWU must be organized to struggle in defense of every union brother and sister!

Ose/Newsday

Kevin Harrington

What happened to Harrington came on the heels of similar attacks against four black Muslim women bus drivers. Since March 2002, these women—Malikah Alkebulan, Stephanie Lewis, Deirdre Small and Gladys Muhammad—were forced to work out of the public eye because they wore headscarves. An arbitrator and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) upheld this victimization. As we wrote in "Muslim Women Banned from Work in Public" (*WV* No. 816, 26 December 2003), the NYCT's successful attack on these women's rights has given a "green light for more crackdowns on workers, including Sikhs, men who wear skullcaps or yarmulkes and *anyone else* who doesn't 'look right' to the boss."

As Marxists, we defend the right to freedom of religious beliefs. At the same time, as we wrote in "New York TWU: Fight MTA Attacks on Muslim Women Workers" (*WV* No. 799, 14 March 2003), "We recognize that the headscarf prescribed by the Koran...is an expression of the subjugation of women, who are oppressed by *all* religions. But in post-9/11 America, it's the capitalists and their government that are making life hell for all Muslims, including women."

The abuse aimed at these workers is scarring and something they will carry with them. Stigmatizing these workers is part and parcel of creating a vicious climate where denial of civil rights is considered the norm. The U.S. ruling class continues to use September 11 as a cover for ratcheting up the screws of repression, going after the most vulnerable first, fomenting racism and bigotry against anyone deemed "deviant." Because Sikhs wear turbans, they have suffered unremitting harassment and physical attacks alongside Muslims. Only days after September 11, a Sikh gas station owner, Balbir Singh Sodhi, was gunned down in Arizona. On July 11 of this year, Rajinder Singh Khalsa, a Sikh limousine driver, was kicked and beaten unconscious on the sidewalk in Queens by racist thugs who ridiculed his turban and yelled, "Go back to your country."

It didn't take long for the ruling class to extend the "terrorist" label to struggling unionists. In 2001, striking teachers in Middletown, New Jersey were labeled "Taliban" by city bureaucrats. When workers suffer racist abuse, when a union militant is framed up and fired, when Muslim women are pulled from their jobs and a Sikh worker is targeted, the TWU bureaucrats barely lift a finger, instead looking to the bosses' courts and arbitrators, and cower behind the slave-labor Taylor Law, which outlaws strikes by state workers, as an excuse for doing nothing. But any union leadership worth its salt would stop work on the spot, and be prepared to defend its members from company reprisals. An anti-capitalist, class-struggle leadership of the TWU would mobilize its multiracial membership in defiance of every act of prejudice and company attempts to take away hard-fought gains.■

Canada...

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law, both in Iran and in Canada. Yet, lacking a working-class axis, they end up seeing the imperialist governments—far greater enemies of the world's working class than the ayatollahs of impoverished neocolonial Iran—as potential allies. In fact, the anti-clerical reformists of the WCPI foster terrible illusions in "democratic" Western imperialism.

For example, the WCPI backs the French government's racist campaign to ban girls from wearing the headscarf in schools. Part of a broader crusade by the French rulers against the country's large North African Muslim population, this is also a gross act of state interference with personal religious belief. Our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France sharply oppose the campaign for state bans on the veil, and further point out that expelling girls from school for wearing it can only lead to greater isolation and oppression for them, reinforcing their religious beliefs.

For many years the WCPI has campaigned for imperialist governments in Europe and Canada to close Iranian embassies in their countries. This demand has been taken up by the coordinator of the anti-*sharia* campaign, Homa Arjomand, who recently wrote to the Canadian government, demanding that it "break all its diplomatic relations with the Iranian regime" (*WPI Briefing*, 27 July). The WCPI has also repeatedly called on the UN to intervene on behalf of the oppressed in the Near East. With such positions, they lend credence to the imperialists' democratic pretensions and call on them to act as cops of the world. Their willingness to accommodate pro-imperialist forces in their anti-*sharia* campaign has not fallen from the sky.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Any perspective for the liberation of women must start with revolutionary opposition to the imperialist rulers, who exploit workers at home while subjugating and plundering entire countries in the Third World. It is necessary to generate the resources to change the material conditions of life, and that can only come from the expropriation of the capitalist class. Looking ahead to the socialist revolution, in *Origin of the Family* Engels wrote:

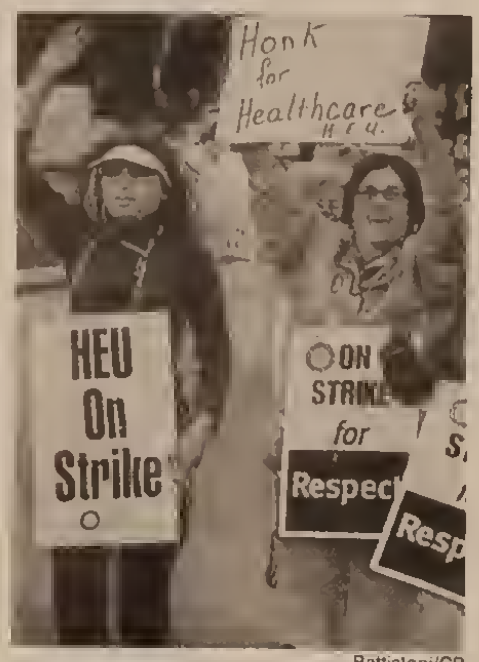
> "With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike, whether they are legitimate or not."

When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia in 1917, they sought to carry out this program. But the resources of the new workers state, devastated by imperialist war, famine and civil war, were agonizingly slender, and this imposed harsh limits on the measures they could take. Even so, health care and education were free, and there was child care in workplaces. The Bolsheviks' earliest measures were directed at the emancipation of women. Unlike both modern bourgeois law and religious tradition, they made marriage and divorce simple matters of civil registration. The welfare of children was the responsibility of the state. They did away with the repressive laws against homosexuality and abortion.

How do we get to the revolution that alone can bring the liberation of women? And how do we address the conditions of oppressed immigrant women in this country who are caught between the stifling restrictions of their own communities and the racist walls erected by Canadian capitalist society? The working class alone has the power to sweep away this violent, exploitative system. Workers must be won to the understanding that in championing the rights of women and immigrants, they advance the interests of the class as a whole. This means opposing every hint of discrimination against people for their religion or ethnicity, while exposing the pernicious influence of all religions. It means taking up the struggle for free 24-hour child care and free quality health care as measures crucial to addressing the special oppression of women.

The Trotskyist League is a small revolutionary Marxist organization, and within our capacities, we seek to give leadership to working-class struggles through the force of our program, as part of the essential struggle to forge a multiracial revolutionary vanguard party. As our comrade told the audience at the June 26 meeting against *sharia* law:

> "As fighters for women's liberation, we oppose the introduction of the *sharia* laws. We are also for the separation of church and state, to which end we also oppose [the law's] application to other religions, be it Catholic, Jewish or Ismaili....
>
> "I am a trade unionist; we believe the way forward lies in mobilizing the integrated unions to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and their families and for the full integration of women into the workforce. The brutal oppression of women is fundamental to the capitalist system and must be replaced by the rule of the working people."■



Battistoni/CP

Canadian multiracial working class has the social power and interest to beat back capitalist assaults. Picket lines of Vancouver hospital workers in April.

Health Care...

(continued from page 5)

burning issue in strike after strike, particularly in Southern California. Maintaining employer-paid health benefits was a central demand in both the L.A. transit strike and grocery workers strike last year. SEIU Local 660 nurses have also shown their willingness to fight in repeated battles with the county, not only in defense of their own livelihoods, but in defense of the patients they serve.

However, the militancy and determination of this multiracial union membership have been consistently held in check, their interests and those of L.A.'s poor betrayed by the union's pro-capitalist misleaders. In 2000, SEIU union bureaucrats scuttled a strike by 47,000 county workers after only one day under the cover of a statement by L.A.'s Cardinal Mahony, who cynically appealed to the interests of "the poorest and most vulnerable members of our community" against the overwhelmingly black and Latino county workers. Having poured union money into the campaign coffers of the very same Democratic Party county supervisors that Local 660 went on strike against, the SEIU tops did not even set up a strike fund in 2000, instead spending $700,000 on TV and radio ads. The county supervisors such as Democrats Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky, who now cry crocodile tears while shutting down vital health services, are the same ones who as MTA (Metropolitan Transportation Authority) Board members railed against the transit mechanics when they fought for affordable health care during last year's strike.

Now the hotel workers in UNITE HERE, many of them immigrants, are in a contract dispute with the hotel bosses where protection of health benefits is a key issue. The Los Angeles hotel bosses have unilaterally imposed a takeaway contract that deducts $10 a week from what are already poverty wages! Meanwhile, UNITE HERE members in San Francisco have been locked out. We say: For a solid hotel workers strike! The multiracial unionized working class, wielding its discipline and militancy to the righteous anger of the ghettos and barrios, has both the power and the interest to fight for free, quality medical care for all. To lead this battle, the working class must mobilize its social power independent of the capitalists and their state. The labor tops' support for the bosses' political parties, such as the Democrats, also means support for the state that ensures capitalist class rule through force and violence against those they exploit. Workers desperately need their own political party, a revolutionary party that will take up all the struggles of the exploited and oppressed and fight for a workers government.

The crisis of medical care cries out for a socialist revolution that will lay the basis for a society that will end all exploitation and oppression. What we need is free, quality health care, education, housing and jobs for all! We need communist medicine, where doctors will be servants of the people, hospitals will be havens to heal the sick, and research on vaccinations, new medical techniques and improved drugs will be internationally coordinated and used for the benefit of all.■

Donate $$$ for Locked-Out Hotel Workers!

San Francisco

Hotel workers organized by UNITE HERE in San Francisco have been locked out of their jobs for over five weeks by the hotel owners' multi-employer Hotel Council. From sunup to sundown maids, cooks, bellmen, bartenders and servers walk picket lines at 14 of the fanciest hotels. UNITE HERE Local 2 has established a "Solidarity Fund" to financially assist the locked-out workers. Trade unions across the country and individual workers should donate as an act of class solidarity to defeat the bosses' union-busting.

Two days after UNITE HERE Local 2 began a two-week strike on September 29 against four hotels, ten other hotels retaliated by locking out their workers. When the two-week strike ended, the hotel bosses refused to let the workers return to work, locking out over 4,000 workers at 14 hotels and replacing them by hiring scabs. Reportedly, some Teamsters clerical workers are now crossing picket lines to work at struck hotels. The UNITE HERE bureaucrats rely on their Democratic Party "friends," like Mayor Gavin Newsom, who has even walked on the picket line in response to the intransigence of the hotel owners. But the working class can only rely on its own independent strength. The hotels should be shut down through mass-union action!

Since their contracts expired, hotel workers in L.A., Washington, D.C. and San Francisco have been struggling for their right to organize and negotiate as a national union against multimillion-dollar, multinational hotel chains like Hilton, Sheraton and Hyatt. The hotel workers are fighting for an increase in wages, no increase in workers' health benefit contributions, decent pensions and a two-year contract term that would expire in 2006. This would enable the workers to have a common contract expiration date with UNITE HERE hotel workers in nine other cities, including Boston, Chicago and New York.

Every worker in the U.S. has a stake in the hotel workers' fight! This is a question of workers' right to organize. This labor battle is linked to the struggle for the rights of immigrants, black people, Latinos and women, who make up the bulk of this workforce.

Make checks/money orders payable to: **Local 2 Solidarity Fund.**

Send donations to: **Mike Casey, President, UNITE HERE Local 2, 209 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102-3705.**

Subscription...

(continued from page 4)

South Carolina, we were invited to give a presentation to a black student group. On our trip to Atlanta, Georgia comrades discovered that the Black Student Alliance at Georgia State University had been victimized by the campus administration for protesting a racist provocation by a notorious fraternity. Comrades reported back to *WV* about this incident (see "Black Student Alliance Suspended for Protesting Racist Frat," *WV* No. 833, 1 October).

We have been longtime fighters for the freedom of black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and sought to highlight his case in the course of this year's subscription drive. It was notable that while many students had never heard of Mumia Abu-Jamal, most who had were black students. We were also pleasantly surprised to find that many students at elite Bryn Mawr College, just outside Philadelphia, the city where Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up and convicted, not only knew about him, but a couple had even written papers about his case and the 1985 police bombing of the MOVE organization. SYC video showings of the Partisan Defense Committee video *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal* on campuses around the country drew many people, including at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, where a taped speech by Mumia was played as the commencement address some years ago.

Regional and Local Highlights

Comrades in the Bay Area undertook some of the most successful regional trips this year—a trip by two comrades to Boulder and Denver, Colorado netted a whopping 213 points! Bay Area and Los Angeles comrades made the "Northern Tour," a trip that encompassed campuses in Oregon and Washington, as well as sales to longshore workers in the ports of Portland and Seattle, selling 208 points. Despite a heavy load of regional trips, comrades also did very well selling subscriptions locally—comrades sold 177 points on Bay Area campuses and 48 points to trade unionists. Three comrades from the Bay Area topped the national competition for most points sold. Congratulations to Vanessa, who with 215 points sold the most subscriptions of any comrade by far! Honorable mention goes to Aman with 143 points and Idan with 120.

The Los Angeles local covered a wide area including Arizona, UC Santa Barbara, San Diego, UC Riverside and UC Irvine. Reflecting the high level of union activity and struggle in L.A., the local easily overshot its goal of 50 points for subscriptions to trade unionists, reaching 72 points through sales to the Labor Day rally, hotel workers rallies, port truckers, longshoremen and others. Many of these subscriptions were to *Espartaco*, showing a real receptivity to our press among Latino workers. Special thanks go to our ever-youthful sympathizer, Steve B., who sold the most among L.A. comrades with a total of 86 points.

The Chicago local traveled to the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The local assisted the Bay Area with a trip to the University of Texas at Austin where two comrades endured a grueling 113-degree heat index. Chicago comrades also helped the New York local with a trip to the Tidewater area in Virginia where we were able to reconnect with longtime trade-union subscribers and sell to longshore workers as well as Newport News shipyard workers. The Chicago local sold 70 points on campuses locally, including at the University of Chicago and University of Illinois at Chicago.

In Boston comrades visited regional campuses including Bennington College, the University of New Hampshire, Wellesley College and Clark University and helped New York comrades with a trip to campuses in western Massachusetts. Locally at Harvard University, where we look to find a few class traitors who would become professional revolutionaries, some found our "Nationalize Harvard!" poster nothing short of scandalous.

The New York branch made many regional trips, including several to the South. A tour of North Carolina campuses netted 103 points. Despite being drenched by Tropical Storm Ivan, comrades touring Georgia intersected students at Atlanta campuses and met with trade-union subscribers in both Atlanta and at the port of Savannah, where longshore workers remarked on our staying power: "You've been coming here for 20 years!" A couple of these workers, who had already renewed their subscriptions via mail so they wouldn't miss an issue, told us that they like our paper's national and international scope and that we link the power of labor and the fight against racial oppression. Comrades from New York also spoke with longshoremen at the port of Charleston, South Carolina. In all three Southern port cities we visited the question of organizing non-unionized port truckers was a big issue in discussions. We were also able to meet and discuss with workers involved in the port truckers strikes that took place around the country last spring (see "Support and Organize the Port Truckers!" *WV* No. 826, 14 May).

Other highlights of the New York local's regional work included Rutgers-New Brunswick, a tour of campuses in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

Included in our "at large" points total are 148 points for subscriptions to *WV* sold by our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada/Ligue Trotskyste du Canada as part of their *WV/Spartacist Canada* subscription drive. Subscriptions mailed in from locations that aren't serviced by particular SL locals make up the remainder of the "at large" points.

Congratulations to our comrades and sympathizers for all their hard work—it certainly paid off! We welcome our new readers—and our old readers—and hope that for many of you reading our communist press will be the first step toward greater involvement in the social struggles through which a revolutionary working-class leadership will be forged.■

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White House...

(continued from page 1)

opponents of socialist revolution on the left to forsake their endless quest for a left reformer from the ranks of the Democrats. There is the seemingly born-yesterday Workers World Party, which proclaims, "Bush Win Sets Stage for Wide Fightback" (*Workers World*, 11 November). Workers World and its International ANSWER Coalition, along with the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and the Revolutionary Communist Party and its Not In Our Name coalition, consciously built an Iraq antiwar movement designed to provide a platform for left-talking Democrats like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson who preached that young activists and working people must vote Democrat.

It is precisely the move to vote Democrat—expressed this year through the "Anybody but Bush" sentiment—that has bolstered the fortunes of the Republican right. Such a move is consciously designed as a substitute for class and social struggle, advocating that workers and the oppressed place their confidence in capitalist politicians instead of relying on their own power and organizations. The role of black and "progressive" Democrats, like those who addressed antiwar rallies, is to head off any possibility of social struggle and to direct discontent toward the ballot box. The absence of class and social struggle—the kinds of struggles that can transcend racial, ethnic and religious divisions—provides the basis for the racist fundamentalists to gain ground.

Certainly there is plenty to fight against. Increased attacks on working people will surely follow the election, including attacks on wages, on Social Security, on medical care, on education,

WV Photo

Spartacist contingent at March 20 demonstration against the occupation of Iraq in New York City.

on the right to abortion and, quite simply, on the freedom to protest without the threat of jail time. But it is no less true that these attacks have been in process for three decades under the governance of both Republicans and Democrats. The truth—as explained by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—is that working people will only face increasing misery and oppression unless they rise in combat against the capitalist order and overturn it through socialist revolution.

The working class in the U.S. does indeed have very low political consciousness. At its birth with the wave of industrialization in the late 19th and early 20th century in Jim Crow America, the working class was ethnically and racially divided, a division then maintained by the Democratic Party and by the lily-white craft-based American Federation of Labor unions. The racial divisions that persist to this day have played an enormous role in retarding the political consciousness of the American proletariat, with most workers lacking even a sense of common class interests. But political consciousness notwithstanding, there have been gigantic class-struggle confrontations with the bosses in America as fierce as any on the globe.

Estrin/NY Times

Volunteer for Kerry in Miami on election day. Fight for black liberation, socialism requires break with Democratic Party of racism and war.

It is the capitalist system of exploitation itself that creates and perpetuates conflicts between the workers, those socially organized to produce everything, and the capitalists, those who rake in profits by exploiting the labor of others. The basis for such meager social benefits as still exist in this society—Social Security, unemployment insurance, public education and employer-paid health insurance—was laid by the class struggles of the 1930s that led to the organization of workers, black and white, into country-wide industrial unions.

The Democratic Party has its name stamped on these reforms. But in reality, they were concessions made under battle-field conditions of enormous worker struggles. Contrary to what many working people who support Democrats would like, the Democratic Party, even if it wanted to, cannot by mere act of will create another period of New Deal-like reforms. There is simply no reason for this country's capitalist rulers—and the Democrats are simply the other party of the bosses—to concede anything without a struggle.

Black Oppression and "Moral Values"

The particular version of Christian fundamentalism now associated with the Bush White House developed over the past four decades as an ideological umbrella enabling white racist bigots to link together their hostility to affirmative action, welfare, legalized abortion, public acceptance of homosexuality and other expressions of social liberalization. And it first emerged in the mainstream of American politics not through the Republicans, but with the Democratic administration of "ethnic purity," "born-again" Christian Jimmy Carter. Carter launched a "moral" rearmament crusade to refurbish the image of America's imperialist rulers—who had fallen into some disrepute following the civil rights movement and the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam—while renewing U.S. imperialism's Cold War drive against the Soviet Union. More recently, it was the oh-so-personable Southern Baptist Bill Clinton who gutted welfare and completed Ronald Reagan's initiative to fill the prisons with black people as the "alternative" to the poverty and unemployment in the nation's ghettos.

The most recent aspirant to black leadership and the sole shining light for the Democrats during their electoral drubbing is Barack Obama, Senator-elect from Illinois. In the spirit of Booker T. Washington, Obama offers himself as living proof that the system works, invoking the patriotic battle cry: "We are all Americans." Yeah, and we are all featherless bipeds. But neither of these truisms negates the fact that the racial oppression of black people has intensified over the past decades. On this matter, Obama stands with those who claim continued black oppression is self-inflicted.

Affirmative action in the universities has been largely strangled by the bosses' courts and further rendered moot by the skyrocketing costs of a college education with little regret from John Kerry or, before him, Al Gore. With the limited gains of the civil rights movement increasingly shredded, black people's right to vote was itself attacked up front in the last presidential election in Florida, and this time around by the challenges, widespread harassment, dirty tricks and endless lines at the polling places where those with little voted. In his 1 November *New York Times* column, for example, Bob Herbert described a flyer circulating in black neighborhoods in Milwaukee which asserted that people who had voted in prior elections, as well as people who had been found guilty of anything, including traffic violations, or who had any family members who had been found guilty of anything, could not vote. "If you violate any of these laws," the leaflet declared, "you can get ten years in prison and your children will get taken away from you"!

It is not surprising that the Deep South and other anti-union backwaters in the U.S. provided the shock troops of religious, racist reaction. It is disquieting, but also not surprising, that a not small portion of those hit hardest by joblessness—workers in West Virginia, Iowa and Ohio—cast their ballots for "moral values." For the time being, they have traded in their hopes for a better life on earth for Monopoly game deeds to mansions in heaven. The spectre of gay marriage, which would if legalized have zero impact on the lives of those not similarly disposed, undoubtedly moved many to vote up a morality they easily forgo when the possibilities for pleasure present themselves. We forthrightly defend the right to gay marriage as an elementary defense of democratic rights. It is important that most black people, many of whom are quite religious and do not look favorably on gay marriage or the right to abortion, do not vote for the religious right, as they are painfully aware that they will be the first targets of these reactionaries.

The Imperialist Order Cannot Be Reformed

Patriarchal prejudices, a not unimportant prop for the decadent capitalist order, recede during periods of class struggle, as do the divisions based on race, ethnicity and religion. The current period of religious and racist reaction is hardly unique in American history. In the first two decades of the 20th century workers and black people were grotesquely exploited and oppressed, while ranting revivalist preachers like Billy Sunday denounced divorce, whiskey and radicals. Strikes were drowned in blood. In the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution, the forces of reaction mobilized to crush the trade-union movement and met the stirrings for black equality and integration with race riots and lynch law "justice." The Ku Klux Klan grew in quantum leaps while workers' wages, even in the white craft unions, were cut in half. Yet in that crucible of terror, heroic fighters for the working class and for black freedom were forged. Initially these assembled in the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World. In the wake of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, the best of these became core elements of the American Communist Party under the aegis of the Communist International, inspired by the Bolsheviks, who led the, to date, only successful proletarian revolution.

Within a decade, these Communist forces, schooled by Lenin and Trotsky's Communist International in the necessity of linking the class struggle in the U.S. to the fight for black freedom, went on to lead the massive class battles of the 1930s. The promise of these struggles was betrayed to Roosevelt's New Deal Democrats by the Communist Party, which followed the line of the Moscow Stalinists who had usurped political power from the workers in Russia by 1923-24 and gone on to consolidate their rule over the workers state. The line pushed by the Stalinists was to stifle labor struggle internationally while making deals with imperialist rulers in the narrow interests of Russian foreign diplomacy.

The America of today is both similar and quite different from the America of the 1920s: similar in the essential hostility of the capitalist rulers to working-class progress; very different in that the final defeat of the Bolshevik Revolution through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 has rendered the hope for a socialist future a seemingly utopian dream in even the most militant sectors of the working class and in the minds of youth who oppose the crimes of the capitalist system.

But the class struggle, whose high tide thus far was the Russian Revolution, has not been and cannot be extinguished. It is not just a burning necessity; it is inevitable that the American working class will rise in resistance to the unceasing attacks on its well-being over the past 30 years. And then what? The workers can only transcend the conditions under which they are raised through periods of class struggle—and even then only if there is a perceived way forward, which it is the task of a revolutionary workers party to provide. It is in the process of class struggle that a new leadership in the workers movement can emerge, overturning the current betrayers. It is also in the crucible of struggle that the cadres will be assembled to forge the internationalist revolutionary party that can lead the overturn of America's blood-soaked capitalist-imperialist system and form a workers government. This would provide the crucial beginning to the creation of a world socialist order that will end for all time the exploitation and oppression of man by man. ■

China...

(continued from page 7)

recovery from the devastating results of Mao's Great Leap Forward in the late 1950s.

Millions of students were mobilized as Red Guards, supposedly to fight against bureaucratism, and, according to the RCP, against the restoration of capitalism. It played out quite differently in the real world. In January 1967, when workers in Shanghai organized a general strike to defend their standard of living, along with a national railway strike, Mao sent his Red Guards and they smashed the strikes. The orders the Red Guards were given by Mao could be summed up as the "Two Whatevers": "Support whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made and follow whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave."

There is a prejudice derived from class society that the rulers would only work with their brains while the slaves would only work with their hands. The idea of resolving this class prejudice of the Chinese intelligentsia by sending students, intellectuals and professionals out to the countryside for a period of time to learn by toiling with the peasants has real merit. But, implemented by Mao's bureaucracy, this became brutal punishment for long periods of time for many of those who disagreed with Mao, especially intellectuals and professionals.

The Cultural Revolution polarized Chinese society along the wrong lines by pitting subjectively revolutionary student youth against workers defending their standard of living. There was no side for revolutionaries in this fight within the Stalinist bureaucracy. More people died in the Cultural Revolution than in the suppression of Tiananmen. Yet the RCP hails Mao's Cultural Revolution.

After Mao died, the Deng wing of the bureaucracy resumed control of the government. The market reforms, begun in 1978, spawned a new class of rich peasants in the countryside and petty entrepreneurs. This, along with increasing unemployment in the cities, has laid the basis for the huge disparities in wealth that exist in China today.

Students and the intelligentsia were fervent supporters of the market reforms. Deng denounced the Cultural Revolution, and this sparked a period of debate within the intelligentsia in the early 1980s. The mainstream outlook for Chinese intellectuals became what is called the "New Enlightenment," which was in large measure seen as emancipation from what they thought was orthodox Marxism. The intellectuals of the "New Enlightenment," which greatly influenced the students protesting at Tiananmen, knew very little about Chinese history. They had simply imported Western ideas into the reform process. In particular, the students and intellectuals had a lot of illusions that "democracy" would necessarily go together with a market economy.

For Marxists, democracy is one of the political forms of a state. As I said earlier, the class nature of the state is determined by what type of property ownership over the means of production is defended by the cops and army. When we Marxists refer to "democracy," we ask: For what class? Many students and intellectuals had illusions in the bourgeois democracy of the U.S. This was conditioned by China's alliance with U.S. imperialism.

Wang Hui of the Chinese "New Left" points out in "The New Criticism" that, while China has always been involved in foreign trade, "The Open Door policies of Deng Xiaoping demanded a much deeper insertion of China into the world market. How did that happen? A key step in the process was China's invasion of Vietnam in 1978 [sic—1979]—the first war of aggression by the PRC after 1949." When China invaded Vietnam, the Spartacist League/U.S. raised the slogan: "China: Don't Be a Cat's Paw of U.S. Imperialism!" But why did China invade Vietnam? In the first place, it was only four years after the Vietnamese workers and peasants drove U.S. imperialism out of their country. This was a historic military defeat for U.S. imperialism. China had volunteers fighting in Vietnam against U.S. imperialism, too.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mao's China became very hostile to the Soviet Union. Mao argued that the Soviet Union, not U.S. imperialism, was the greatest threat to the world. This led to Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972, where he embraced Mao at the very moment that U.S. warplanes were bombing Vietnam! Vietnam was a close ally of the Soviet Union. In addition to invading Vietnam in 1979 (by the way, they got whupped by seasoned Vietnamese troops), China aided the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan.

L. Zhensheng

During Mao's "Cultural Revolution," regime's perceived enemies were humiliated, persecuted and often killed.

Boccon-Gibod/Sipa

Chinese foreign minister meets with Afghan *mujahedin* in Pakistan, 1980.

Both Mao and Deng shared great-power aspirations based on the nationalist and anti-Marxist dogma that socialism could be built in one country. China's criminal anti-Soviet alliance with the U.S. happened because the U.S. changed its policy toward China, not the other way around. "Socialism in one country" necessitates accommodating to imperialism. China's alliance with U.S. imperialism contributed to the downfall of the Soviet degenerated workers state. The fact is that without the Soviet nuclear shield the Chinese Revolution would have very likely faced nuclear destruction by U.S. imperialism.

The increase in wealth from the market reforms only affected a very small fraction of the Chinese population. Skyrocketing inflation exacerbated this economic disparity and corruption became rampant. The "New Enlightenment" began to diverge on this issue. The government, led by Zhao Ziyang, implemented anti-corruption campaigns, but students wanted a more effective campaign.

Within China, illusions in American "democracy" and the benevolence of U.S. imperialism began to take off in 1972. In mid February 1989, Gorbachev withdrew the Red Army from Afghanistan. The Tiananmen protests began about two months later.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Stewart...

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Rutgers on a full scholarship and studied under Arthur Kinoy, who taught her "to go to court to change the world." Stewart joked that she is probably best remembered from those years for riding a motorcycle to Rutgers, New Jersey from the projects she lived in on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

After establishing her own law practice, Lynne Stewart took up the defense of people whose politically motivated actions led the government to brand them as criminals, as well as unpopular cases involving violent crime. She defended protesters against South African apartheid's ambassadors in rugby shorts, the Springboks. She was involved in the defense of Larry Davis, who was acquitted of attempted murder following a 1986 shootout with police in the Bronx, as well as in the Brinks case—a 1981 armored car heist in Rockland County, involving leftists, which left three people dead. Stewart testified that speaking to the press to counter media violence-baiting was essential. Regarding the Brinks case, Stewart testified that effective defense was "not just the nuts and bolts, not doing just the cross-examinations, but neutralizing the territory in which we were working."

Now Stewart finds herself charged as an accomplice in terrorism for conveying sheik Abdel Rahman's views to an Egyptian reporter who then issued a press release in 2000 stating that the sheik had withdrawn his earlier support to a cease-fire between the Islamic Group and the Mubarak dictatorship in Egypt. Against insinuations by the prosecution (and statements by Bush's top cop John Ashcroft!) that this was a "secret message" to incite terrorism, Stewart testified: "This was done so openly, so above board, so out there for everybody to know about.... It was an expression of his personal view as to the peace initiative. It was not a message: 'go to the third sand dune and dig up the weapons' or something."

The government's case rests largely on secret wiretaps and videotape recordings of the legal team's meetings with sheik Abdel Rahman in prison, phone calls from him and by the paralegal Abdel Sattar (*90,000* wiretaps on his phone alone!). The prosecution argues that Stewart deliberately defrauded the U.S. government by signing letters of affirmation that she would abide by the draconian "Special Administrative Measures" under which her client was imprisoned. The truth is as Stewart tells it: the government violated the essential right of confidentiality in attorney/client privilege. Everything Stewart brought into the prison was thoroughly searched by guards. The letters she brought in addressed the political climate in the Muslim community here post-September 11 and in Egypt and were very much a part of determining when and how best to pursue legal challenges to the horrific conditions of imprisonment derived from the SAMs. (For example, prison authorities finally allowed the sheik out of his cell to attend religious services...*in a cage just for him!*)

U.S. Government Is Biggest Terrorist on the Planet

In a courthouse near the site of the monstrous destruction of the World Trade Center, and around the third anniversary of the September 11 attack, the prosecution was outrageously granted the right to present videotapes of Osama bin Laden calling for sheik Abdel Rahman's release. Similarly, the prosecution spent months pummeling the jurors with "evidence" of terrorist attacks around the world by alleged supporters of sheik Abdel Rahman, from the killing of tourists in Luxor, Egypt, to the bombing of the USS *Cole* and more. What does any of this have to do with Lynne Stewart and her legal team? Nothing!

On the stand, Lynne Stewart exposed the U.S. government's association with bin Laden and his ilk. Stewart said she knew that "Osama bin Laden had been a part of a wealthy Saudi family, aligned with certain American oil interests.... He was in Afghanistan and he had been fighting for the United States government in Afghanistan when we first heard the word *mujaheddin*."

Attorney Michael Tigar read from a 22 September 1995 *Wall Street Journal* article which reported how the defense team in the sheik's 1995 trial produced government documents which "confirmed for the first time that the U.S. Army trained Muslims in the U.S. to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. In particular, in 1989, Sergeant Ali A. Mohammed of the Army Special Forces based in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, taught several courses to local Muslims in Jersey City, New Jersey." The government's key informant in that case was a confessed perjurer and double agent whom the FBI paid $1 million to entrap the defendants in that 1995 conspiracy trial by hatching "plots to bomb the United Nations and FBI buildings in New York and the Holland and Lincoln tunnels beneath the Hudson River."

As we stated earlier (see "Drop the Charges Against Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry, Ahmed Abdel Sattar!", *WV* No. 829, 9 July): "Fairness and logic should dictate that the chief executives of the United States government should be standing trial: Osama bin Laden and the 'Islamic Group' were armed, trained and financed by Washington in its 'holy war' against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan! Now, after Frankenstein's monster, bin Laden and other anti-communist CIA 'assets' turned on their creator, the government turns and threatens a leftist lawyer with decades behind bars." We Trotskyists hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan and think they could have and should have mopped up the CIA-backed Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin*. Extending the social gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution to Afghanistan was the best hope for women, leftists and ethnic minorities. Thus we politically oppose the views of an Islamic cleric like sheik Abdel Rahman. But what's critical for people to understand is that Stewart and co-defendants are being smeared as guilty by association with the sheik merely for defending him in court! This frame-up literally threatens *everyone*.

In the face of this sinister government terror frame-up, Lynne Stewart concluded her defense testimony with a principled and brave statement of her own personal views on violence. Stewart stated her opposition to "terrorist violence" because "it is not directed against institutions, or, it is directed against civilians and therefore it cannot be excused," She said:

> "I am a revolutionary with a small 'R,' that I do believe that basic change is necessary. I think some of it will be accomplished nonviolently such as the fact that my granddaughter now plays NCAA basketball and maybe can play in Madison Square Garden someday. That revolution happened nonviolently. But I think to rid ourselves of the entrenched voracious type of capitalism that is in this country that perpetuates sexism and racism, I don't think that can come nonviolently."

We urge our readers to take an active stand in solidarity and come down to the United States District Court, 40 Foley Square in Manhattan to show their support to the defendants. Donate to the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 350 Broadway, Suite 700, New York, NY 10013.■

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

These are the class-war prisoners who have received or currently receive monthly stipends from the PDC.

Mumia Abu-Jamal: Former Black Panther Party spokesman, well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and award-winning journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Jamal was framed up for the 1981 killing of police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. December 9 marks 23 years of incarceration for a killing the cops know he did not commit. More than three years ago, Jamal's attorneys submitted to the courts the sworn confession of professional hitman Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner. But to the racists in black robes of both the Pennsylvania and federal judiciaries, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of a fighter for the oppressed like Jamal.

As the U.S. Supreme Court issues ominous rulings on the death penalty, and with his final federal appeals in motion, Mumia remains on death row, just a short walk from the death chamber. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must now redouble their efforts on his behalf. *Free Mumia Now!*

Jerry Dale Lowe: The Partisan Defense Committee continues its support to the West Virginia United Mine Workers union militant. Lowe was framed up for the shooting death of a scab contractor at Arch Mineral's Ruffner mine during a seven-month strike in 1993 and sentenced the following year to eleven years with no possibility of parole. Jerry was recently allowed into a halfway house, having served nearly the entirety of his frame-up sentence.

The bullet that killed the scab had come from an area where armed company thugs from Elite Security had been positioned. When it became clear that prosecutors had no evidence to convict Lowe under state law, the Clinton Justice Department stepped in to railroad Lowe to prison on charges of "interfering with interstate commerce."

We urged the UMWA and other militants everywhere to take up Lowe's cause, but the leadership of the UMWA, along with the rest of the union bureaucracy, abandoned Lowe to face the wrath of the labor-hating government alone. More than a decade has been stolen from this class-war fighter.

Eight MOVE members, **Chuck Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Debbie Sims Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Africa, Delhert Orr Africa, Edward Goodman Africa** and **William Phillips Africa**, are in their 27th year in prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege on their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own crossfire. Convicted of the same charges, **Merle Africa** died in prison in 1998.

December 16th Committee

Anarchist Black Cross

Nat Weinstein

WV Photo

WV Photo

Clockwise from top left: Jaan Laaman, Ray Luc Levasseur, Janine Africa, Jamal Hart, Jerry Dale Lowe and Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa.

Jaan Laaman has now spent two decades behind bars. This leftist activist was part of the Ohio 7, who were convicted for their role in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. Before their arrests in Ohio and Virginia in 1984 and 1985, they were targets of massive manhunts throughout the East Coast and Midwest. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds and interrogated. The government piled one sentence atop another, intent on keeping the Ohio 7 imprisoned until the day they die.

The politics of the Ohio 7 were once shared by thousands of radicals during the heyday of the Vietnam antiwar movement and the New Left, who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary to "Third World" liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the "respectable" left. From the standpoint of the proletariat, the actions of Laaman and his comrades against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. As the PDC has said from the time the Ohio 7 were first persecuted by the capitalist state, these courageous fighters should not have served a day in prison and should be free now.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison; he was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, who was murdered by prison guards in 1971. In prison for over 39 years, Pinell was this year again denied parole despite hundreds of letters of support, five job offers and a clean record for over 25 years. Now 60 years old, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious hellhole, Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha Nebraska Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of a racist FBI COINTELPRO operation, framed up for an explosion in 1970 which killed a cop. Both were convicted on the basis of perjured testimony, sentenced to life, and have now spent more than 30 years apiece in jail. The Nebraska Board of Pardons refuses to lessen their sentences so that they can be considered for parole.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years on bogus firearms possession charges, targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although initially charged under Pennsylvania laws, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown in prison. He is not eligible for parole. Hart had been incarcerated at Fairton, New Jersey, where he was subjected to abuse by brutal and racist prison guards. After numerous provocations in which he was repeatedly thrown into solitary confinement, Hart was recently transferred to Ray Brook, New York, near the Canadian border, many hundreds of miles from his family and supporters.

We recently began sending stipends to **Jamal Holiday**, a victim of the brutal police repression during the protests against the Republican National Convention this past summer. Holiday, a young black man arrested during these protests, spent his 20th birthday behind bars. On August 30, Holiday was part of the Poor People's March when a plainclothes cop drove an unmarked motor scooter into the crowd of demonstrators, striking at least one woman. The protesters reacted in defense against this apparently crazed individual. In standard racial profiling, Holiday was picked up the next day by police who claimed surveillance cameras showed him to be wearing the same clothing (a baseball cap and T-shirt) as an individual filmed kicking the undercover provocateur. Facing up to seven years in prison on assault charges, Holiday had his bail raised from $50,000 to $250,000 based in part on the fact that political literature was found in his home.

In addition, during this past year the Partisan Defense Committee has aided other class-war prisoners. Until he was released in September, the PDC sent monthly stipends to **Sherman Austin**. Austin was railroaded to prison for a year and is now serving an outrageously restrictive three-year probation for a pure and simple thought crime: hosting an anarchist Web site (www.raisethefist.com).

This year **Ray Luc Levasseur**, one of the Ohio 7, was released to a halfway house after 20 years of imprisonment. Like his comrade, Jaan Laaman, he remained during his two decades of imprisonment an opponent of imperialism and racist oppression.

Not long after he became a recipient of the PDC stipend fund, Palestinian activist **Farouk Abdel-Muhti** was released from a torturous 718 days of detention, during which he fought for the freedom of all immigrant detainees. As a result of his jailing and subsequent beatings, a hunger strike and repeated denials of medicine, Abdel-Muhti's health deteriorated. On July 21, immediately after giving a speech denouncing U.S. imperialism, he collapsed and died of a heart attack. We will not forget what was done to this courageous fighter for the oppressed.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeal will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252. ■

Fred Askew

Farouk Abdel-Muhti
1947-2004

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S.
Local Directory and Public Offices

Web site: www.icl-fi.org • **E-mail address:** vanguard@tiac.net

National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

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Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago
Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 563-0441
Public Office:
Sat. 2-5 p.m.
222 S. Morgan
(Buzzer 23)

Los Angeles
Box 29574, Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239
Public Office: Sat. 2-5 p.m.
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215

New York
Box 3381, Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025
Public Office:
Sat. 1-4 p.m.
299 Broadway, Suite 318

Oakland
Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851
Public Office:
Sat. 1-5 p.m.
1634 Telegraph
3rd Floor

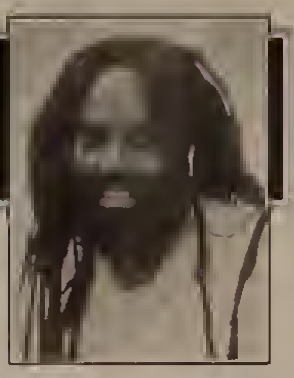
San Francisco
Box 77494
San Francisco
CA 94107

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Vancouver
Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



America's Guantánamo Gulag

On the island of Cuba, stands an outpost of American imperial power—Guantánamo Naval Base.

There, hundreds of men, drawn from all over the world, are entombed in what one British court has called a "legal black hole."

Michael Ratner, an American lawyer who has argued in the U.S. Supreme Court for several people encaged there, has written that Guantánamo is an American interrogation camp, similar to those erected by the Germans during World War II, and outlawed by the Geneva Conventions. In a recent book on the prison camp, Ratner wrote that Guantánamo is a place designed to be beyond the law:

> "We have gone back to a pre-Magna Carta medieval system, not a system of laws, but of executive fiat, where the king—or in this case, the president—simply decides, on any particular day, I'm going to throw you into some prison. You are not going to have access to a lawyer or anybody else, or even know if there are charges against you, or if you will ever be released from this prison. Guantánamo has become our Devil's Island, our Chateau d'If from The Count of Monte Cristo." [From Michael Ratner and Ellen Ray, *Guantánamo: What the World Should Know* (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publ., 2004), p. 6]

If people were shocked by the recent events at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, one need only look at Guantánamo for its inspiration. For, the leadership of Abu Ghraib was exported from Guantánamo to Abu Ghraib with a specific, sinister mission: to "Gitmoize" Abu Ghraib; that is, to treat the people detained there as they had been treated at Guantánamo.

So, the torture of people; the nakedness of people; the brutal beatings of people; the humiliation of people—all of these things were done to Muslim and Arab nationals at Guantánamo.

But, according to Ratner, there was another, insidious method to their brutal madness. Those detained at Guantánamo; they were captured for the purpose of turning them, using state terror to transform these people into snitches to be seeded back into Muslim communities and countries, for the U.S. intelligence agencies. Ratner writes:

> This is exactly what the British did with IRA prisoners. Just as is being done in Guantánamo, they refused to give out the names of detainees for "security reasons" and kept them in detention for long periods of time. During that period, many of them were turned into undercover agents for British intelligence. What is going on in Guantánamo is not just about interrogation, not just about keeping allegedly dangerous people off the battlefield, but about recruiting Muslim informants to go around the Islamic world, to go back to their countries of origin and get information back to the United States, essentially to spy for the United States." [p. 48]

Americans are taking innocent men, putting them in cages, treating them like beasts, *for years*, knowingly, for the purpose of using them against their home communities and countries.

This is the face of American democracy that will be reflected in the eyes of hundreds, and then thousands, and perhaps millions of Muslims. This is the reason that the so-called "War on Terror" is a fraud; it is a war, but a war against reason. It is a mad war, designed by madmen, based on false evidence, and one which threatens to, once again, splash back against the nation that spawned it in global blowback.

We have seen blowback before. It is the grim and bitter lesson that should have prevailed in the gritty smoke of Sept. 11th. Young men, many of them trained by the CIA, and paid by the Saudis, to vanquish the then-"evil empire" of the Soviets in Afghanistan, succeeded in driving Russians from their lands, and flush with victory, turned their sights to those that trained them. They had driven one superpower to its knees; why not another?

Guantánamo, to quote British judges in the *Abassi* case, has become, despite a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, a "legal black hole." ...And like black holes, it threatens to swallow everything around it.

7 October 2004

©2004 Mumia Abu-Jamal

Send urgently needed contributions for Jamal's legal defense, made payable to "National Lawyers Guild Foundation" and earmarked for "Mumia" to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 130 Morningside Drive, Suite 6C, New York, NY 10027.

If you wish to correspond with Jamal, you can write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Holiday Appeal...

(continued from page 16)

Republican National Convention this past summer, the bipartisan "anti-terrorism" laws are directed at anybody whose political views are deemed objectionable by the government. Only three American cities have populations exceeding that of the prisons. New restrictions on unions join dismantling Social Security on the administration's anticipated hit list. Union activists, opponents of the imperialist occupation of Iraq, fighters for black rights, and even the lawyers who try to defend them in court, are faced with the threat of prison.

Standing with those fighters for the oppressed already in the grasp of the capitalist prisons is a necessary step in organizing a class-struggle fight against this all-sided reaction. No case is more urgent than that of death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, Jamal was framed up on charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death. Despite the sworn confession of the real killer, recantation of prosecution witnesses, irrefutable proof of the trial judge's racist bias, and the prosecution's racist jury-rigging, coercion of witnesses, doctoring and concealing evidence, Jamal remains in the shadow of Pennsylvania's death chamber.

This could well be the last Holiday Appeal before the long-awaited decision in the federal appeals court, the last legal step before the U.S. Supreme Court. Ruling on Jamal's federal *habeas corpus* challenge to his conviction and death sentence, in December 2001 federal district court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal's death sentence. At the same time, Yohn affirmed Jamal's conviction, refusing to even consider the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed officer Faulkner. The prosecution appealed, seeking restoration of Jamal's death sentence. Mumia also appealed, seeking to overturn the conviction. Those appeals were on hold until a final determination of Jamal's appeals in the Pennsylvania state courts, a determination which took place earlier this year. In June, the federal appeals court lifted its stay on Jamal's proceedings. A decision could come at any time.

Jamal has been in the racist rulers' sights from the time he was a 15-year-old Panther spokesman. A prominent and widely respected journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Jamal became a supporter of the MOVE organization while covering the weeks-long siege and ultimate brutal cop assault on their Powelton Village home in 1978. Blaming the MOVE victims for the death of a cop in the police crossfire, Philadelphia mayor Rizzo promised to make the "new breed" of journalist pay, and three years later Jamal was gunned down on the street and hauled off to prison. With Jamal silenced behind bars, Philadelphia's besieged black population was without a prominent voice of protest when black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode ordered the police bombing of the MOVE home in 1985, killing eleven black people, five of them children.

Jamal's case cuts to the core of black oppression in the U.S. A black man set up to be legally lynched through state-sanctioned murder, Mumia's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery.

As they listened to Cheney's rantings at last year's convention of the Conservative Political Action Conference, delegates wore "Fry Mumia" T-shirts. This racist and class hatred is not unique to the Republicans. The District Attorney who put Jamal on death row is current Pennsylvania Democratic governor Ed Rendell, and it has been Philadelphia's Democratic Party administration that has fought for his execution for over two decades. The racist rulers of this country—Democrat as well as Republican—want Jamal's execution as a message to anyone who fights against the ravages of this capitalist system—"Shut up or die!"

The threatened execution of Jamal stands in a long tradition of seeking to silence by state murder fighters for the oppressed: the Haymarket Martyrs—anarchists, union organizers and leaders of the fight for the eight-hour workday executed in 1887; Joe Hill—immigrant, migrant worker, IWW militant put up against a wall by a Utah firing squad in 1915. Following the electrocutions of anarchist workers Sacco and Vanzetti by the capitalist rulers of Massachusetts in 1927, Cannon wrote:

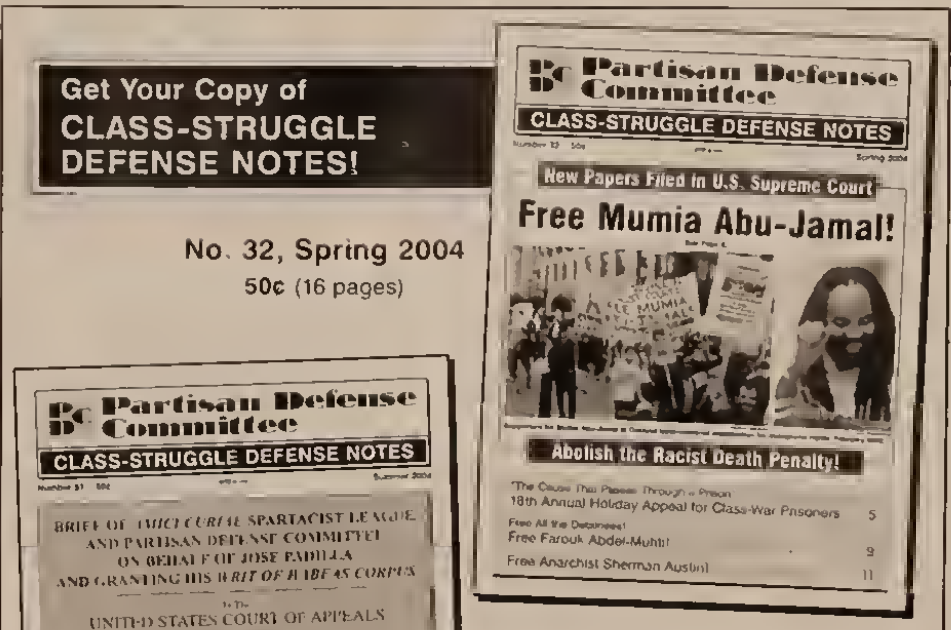
> "The rope which strangled the Haymarket martyrs, the chair which snuffed out the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti, the prison walls which confined them all—these instruments of torture and death are weapons in the class war, employed against prisoners taken on the field of battle."

We seek to mobilize the working people, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression in protest actions centered on the social power of the labor movement. Our fight to free Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty is part of our perspective of winning workers to the understanding that the capitalist state, with its cops and courts, is not some "neutral" agency which serves society as a whole, but rather exists to defend the class rule and profits of the capitalists against those they exploit.

We urge all *WV* readers to join the fight: Free Jamal and the class-war prisoners now! Abolish the racist death penalty! Build the Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners!■

Visit the ICL Web Site! www.icl-fi.org

Get Your Copy of CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES!



No. 32, Spring 2004
50¢ (16 pages)

No. 31, Summer 2003
50¢ (24 pages)

Marxists defend citizenship rights! *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* No. 31 reprints in its entirety the *amici curiae* (friends of the court) brief filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals by the PDC and the Spartacist League in defense of Jose Padilla.

Order from/make checks payable to:
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Phone: (212) 406-4252 E-mail: 75057.3201@compuserve.com

WORKERS VANGUARD

19th Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

The Partisan Defense Committee is launching its 19th annual Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners, those among the inhabitants of America's prison nation who were singled out for standing up to racist capitalist oppression and exploitation. We provide monthly stipends to 16 class-war prisoners—trade-union militants, fighters for black freedom and opponents of imperialism and capitalist militarism—as well as holiday gifts for them and their families. These gifts and messages of solidarity are a necessary reminder to these brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten.

The PDC initiated this stipend program in 1986, reviving a tradition of the early International Labor Defense (ILD) under its secretary from 1925-28, James P. Cannon. Carrying forward the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) principle, "an injury to one is an injury to all," a resolution from the ILD's first conference in 1925 declared:

> "The labor movement must be awakened from its slumber and must be roused to the menacing significance of the attempt of the capitalists to break the morale of the working-class by imprisoning its best fighters. The workers must not be allowed to forget those who lie in prison for them, but must be stirred into action in their defense."

This year's Holiday Appeal takes place as Bush, Cheney & Co. salivate over their prospects for four more years of grinding attacks on labor, immigrants, blacks, gays, women and what remains of the Bill of Rights. With the help of the Democrats, who overwhelmingly voted for the Patriot Act, this administration has overseen a qualitative diminution of democratic rights. Court rulings that stand in their way are used as food for the shredder. Laws they don't like are just ignored. And as seen in the police mobilizations and mass arrests at the

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COC Productions

ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!

New York
Friday, December 10
6 to 11 p.m.
Live jazz with the Bern Nix Trio and special guests Oliver Lake, Anthony Coleman, Roy Campbell and others
6 Harrison St. (at Hudson)
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Take 1 or 9 subway to Franklin St.
$10 Advance • $15 At the door
For more information (212) 406-4252

Bay Area
Sunday, December 5
1 to 4 p.m.
Centro del Pueblo
474 Valencia St.
San Francisco
Near 16th/Mission BART
$10 • $5 Student/Unemployed
For more information (510) 839-0852

Chicago
Sunday, December 12
3 to 7 p.m.
United Electrical Hall
37 South Ashland (at Monroe)
$5 Advance • $8 At the door • $10 Contributing
For more information (312) 563-0442

Fight Sinister Government "Terrorism" Smear

Defend Lynne Stewart!

After months of being smeared in the press as a "secret channel" to deadly terrorism, leftist attorney Lynne Stewart finally got a chance to defend herself in court. With courage and eloquence, Lynne Stewart put the government on trial for shredding supposedly constitutionally protected rights in the post-September 11 reactionary climate of fear, and exposed the U.S. government's history of material support to terrorists like Osama bin Laden. Lynne Stewart's testimony was a defense of every intended victim of the "war on terror" which targets immigrants, leftists, anyone with unpopular views and ultimately the entire labor movement.

At issue here is whether an attorney can defend someone without themselves being accused of the same crime. If not, then nobody in this country can be assured the right to effective legal defense! Also at issue is whether the government has the right to essentially disappear individuals convicted of crimes, severing their right to communicate with the world through "Special Administrative Measures" (SAMs). SAMs deprive prisoners of basic rights and privileges, limiting their access to mail, phone calls, media and even visits by their attorneys. SAMs were introduced under Democrat Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, and expanded under Bush/Asheroft.

Attorney Lynne Stewart, translator Mohammed Yousry and paralegal Ahmed Abdel Sattar are being tried on frame-up charges of providing material support to terrorist activity and conspiring to defraud the U.S. government. This sinister prosecution stems from Stewart's defense of the blind Egyptian cleric, sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, imprisoned for life on charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. If convicted, the 65-year-old Stewart could face up to 40 years in prison.

Stewart's attorney Michael Tigar effectively punctured the government's smear of Stewart as a heinous accomplice in Islamic fundamentalist terrorism by asking Stewart about her personal history and beliefs. A working-class girl from Queens, Stewart described leaving the city to attend Hope College in the Midwest. She testified: "It was a college that was run by, I would have to say, a fundamentalist Christian group, the Reform Church in America. And in 1957, when I arrived there, women could not wear pants on campus, nor smoke, nor be out of the dorms after 8:00. We could not go downtown except with someone else

Edwine Seymour

along with us. So I had...I guess a taste of fundamentalism in college. Didn't care too much for it."

Stewart described working as a school librarian in an all-black school in Harlem, and the development of her political consciousness through direct exposure to and confrontation with the entrenched racism of this society. After having children, Stewart went on to law school at

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WORKERS VANGUARD

50¢

No. 837 | GCU C-701 | 26 November 2004

Defend the Iraqi Peoples Against U.S. Occupiers!

U.S. Imperialists Devastate Falluja

AFP

Falluja. Like "My Lai," the word "Falluja" must be seared into collective memory and consciousness as a monstrous U.S. war crime. Falluja: a city of 300,000, largely depopulated as American "liberators" rode into town in tanks bearing the inscription in schoolbook Arabic, "Keep away or you will be killed." Flattening Falluja was the first act of the second coming of George W. Bush. Mosques were bombed and then stormed by U.S. troops. NBC correspondent Kevin Sites videotaped Marines murdering a wounded, prostrate man in a mosque. This bit of grisly truth was sanitized by NBC (which blacked out the actual shooting) as too much reality about the Iraq occupation to beam into American living rooms.

In assaulting Falluja, the American troops' first act was to seize the city's main hospital to prevent "insurgent propaganda," i.e., word of massive civilian deaths and casualties, from reaching the world. The American military then barred relief workers with the Red Crescent from delivering food, water and medicine to the trapped civilians. Typhoid is up, as families left in the city are forced to drink water polluted with sewage. Water and power lines to the city were cut in advance of the U.S. blitzkrieg and have not been restored. Children are dying. Charred bodies lie strewn among the twisted steel, shattered glass and rubble remnants of the city, and the smell of death is everywhere. Some physicians report evidence of the use of chemical weapons and cluster bombs. Medical authorities guess that at least 800 civilians have perished, but nobody knows.

Hundreds of men fleeing Falluja were separated from their wives and children and ordered to march back to town. "There is nothing that distinguishes an insurgent from a civilian" was the explanation offered by a Cavalry officer. When forced back to Falluja, many males between the ages of 15 and 45 who didn't die in the siege were then arrested. As an Iraqi journalist stated in a firsthand account in the London *Independent* (20 November), "Civilians were told to get out of Falluja, so any man who stayed behind must be in the mujahedin."

Many of those who did manage to get out of Falluja were then killed as they fled to refugee camps or to the homes of relatives outside the city. U.S. forces sank boats ferrying refugees. AP photographer Bilal Hussein dodged gunfire to escape his hometown and attempted to swim across the Euphrates. He watched in horror as, before his eyes, a family of five was shot dead while trying to swim across. Then, he "helped bury a man by the river bank, with my own hands."

The magnitude of the crime demands huge international protest. The international working class, not least the American proletariat, should mount class-struggle actions, demonstrations, strikes and hot-cargoing shipments of war matériel. This requires a political fight against the AFL-CIO labor tops who squandered union coffers and mobilized forces to support the Democratic Party *pro-war* candidate John Kerry who exclaimed, "I'm not talking about leaving [Iraq]. I'm talking about winning!" We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops from Iraq! We call for the defense of the Iraqi peoples against the U.S. occupiers and their puppet Iraqi troops and police. Insofar as the forces on the ground aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers and the mercenaries, we call for their defense. Every blow struck against the U.S. military and allied powers in Iraq is a blow in the interests of the international proletariat.

Racism and Imperialist Occupation

We have warned that as the American military occupation of Iraq encountered resistance, it would become increasingly brutal. Haifa Zangana, an Iraqi-born novelist imprisoned under Saddam Hussein, writes: "Since the nominal handover of sovereignty on June 30, we have witnessed an escalation of Israeli-style collective punishment of Iraqi cities. Civilian carnage, coupled with enormous damage to homes and infrastructure, has become our daily reality" (London *Guardian*, 17 November). Australian journalist John Pilger reports:

> "According to a senior British officer, the Americans view Iraqis as *Untermenschen*, a term that Hitler used in *Mein Kampf* to describe Jews, Romanies and Slavs as sub-humans. This is how the Nazi army laid siege to Russian cities, slaughtering combatants and non-combatants alike. Normalising colonial crimes like the attack on Fallujah requires such racism, linking our imagination to 'the other'."

In this vein, a *Wall Street Journal* editorial (18 November) described the city of Falluja as a "terror den" and justified the shooting of the unarmed, wounded Iraqi man in the mosque. They sneered: "Who from the safety of his Manhattan sofa has standing to judge what that Marine did in that mosque?" The atrocity in the Falluja mosque quickly became a template for the U.S. troops and their Iraqi puppet forces. On November 19, 200-300 Iraqi National Guard troops, backed up by American forces, stormed Baghdad's al-Hanifa mosque, one of the most important Sunni mosques in Iraq, when it was filled with worshippers at the end of Friday prayers, killing two and wounding at least nine.

Le Monde reported that outside the mosque, dozens of men were forced to lie face down on the ground under the guns of the U.S. Army. The violation of the mosques is a huge affront to every Muslim in the region and in the world. With these acts, the deranged, Christian fundamentalist Bush administration proclaims that nothing is sacred, nothing will be spared in the U.S. occupation, and political fallout be damned.

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Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!

The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today

SEE PAGE FOUR

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Teamsters Organizer Assassinated in El Salvador

Honor Gilberto Soto

IBT

On November 5 Teamsters organizer Jose Gilberto Soto was assassinated in El Salvador, gunned down outside his mother's home in Usulután. The veteran organizer, former president of Teamsters Local 11 in Haledon, New Jersey, would have been 50 years old the next day, his birthday. Teamsters president James P. Hoffa issued a statement November 11 saying, "Mr. Soto...was organizing port drivers, the most exploited truck drivers in the U.S., and he was visiting El Salvador on behalf of the Teamsters to meet with Central American trade union leaders and port drivers. Mr. Soto was a trusted and respected Teamster leader from the Port of New York/New Jersey."

"To date, the police have done little to apprehend what appears to be a death squad that killed our representative," the statement pointed out. The Teamsters, while appealing to the U.S. government for a full investigation, have also joined with the International Longshoremen's Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union to offer a $75,000 reward for information leading to capture and conviction of the murderers. Workers should have no illusions that real justice for Gilberto Soto will come from the American imperialist government or its neocolonial satraps in El Salvador, heirs to the murderous D'Aubuisson death-squad regime.

Gilberto Soto was on the front lines of the international class struggle when he was gunned down. He was planning to meet with port workers in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras. El Salvador port truckers endure horrible working conditions, with no legal right to organize and low wages. They are paid only for hours actually hauling, with no compensation for long waits to load or lengthy return trips. According to a National Labor Committee report posted on the Teamsters Web site, Gilberto Soto especially wanted to meet container haulers employed by Maersk, one of the largest shipping companies in the world, based in Denmark. The report stated: "The IBT and SID [Specialized Workers Union in Denmark] were interested in collaborating on a joint project documenting the systematic violations of worker rights by Maersk."

In El Salvador, less than 5 percent of the workforce is unionized. Sweatshops, child labor and persecution of union organizers are rampant. It's a Free Trade Zone international racket, where low-paid workers produce apparel for Wal-Mart, Target, Saks, OshKosh and other famous brands, and the Coca-Cola Company buys sugar from El Salvador mills that use child labor to harvest sugarcane. Ominously, in the early morning hours of November 14, thugs ransacked the offices of the Centro de Estudios y Apoyo Laboral (CEAL), a Salvadoran labor support center that had been making public statements against the murder of Gilberto Soto. Communications and computer equipment was removed, and files had been tampered with. Hands off the Salvadoran labor movement!

Violence against union militants is endemic throughout the Americas—often with the complicity of local regimes and U.S. imperialism. In Colombia, assassination of union militants has escalated into a major war, as the World Business section of the *New York Times* (18 November) noted: "Union activists have fallen by the hundreds here, making Colombia the world's most dangerous country for union organizers." American companies in Colombia like coal producer Drummond and Coca-Cola bottling plants have been accused in lawsuits of hiring paramilitary gunmen to kill organizers.

What can't be denied is that the class struggle continues to flare up. From the *maquilas* where goods are made to the ports where they are shipped around the world, the capitalists have created a new and potentially powerful workforce, whose unionization they fear. Gilberto Soto, a native of El Salvador who came to the U.S. in 1975, understood this. He dedicated his life to organizing the unorganized, from being a Teamsters northeast organizer for port truckers in the United States to his trip to El Salvador. He was also, according to New York CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador), a longtime activist for the Salvadoran leftist FMLN and marched this past summer with CISPES in protests outside the Republican National Convention. We are honored that such a courageous and dedicated man was also a subscriber to *Workers Vanguard*. The way to honor his memory is to redouble efforts to organize port truckers here in the U.S. and in Central America, the cause for which he gave his life. Ultimate justice for working people will only come with the victory of socialist revolutions throughout the Americas.

A funeral mass was held for Gilberto Soto on November 13. The Teamsters' Web site states that donations may be made to the following fund to benefit his wife, Alva "Maritza," and three children, Blanca, Rosalva and Edson: Gilberto Soto Memorial Fund, Wachovia Bank, 358 Market Street, Saddle Brook, NJ 07662, Account No. 1010110478249.■

TROTSKY

LENIN

Defense of the Workers States and International Socialist Revolution

Polemicizing in 1939 against those in the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party who wanted to abandon defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky outlined the link between defense of the USSR and the struggle for international workers revolution. Our fight today for the unconditional military defense of the remaining deformed workers states—China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—and for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats who rule them is likewise part of our struggle for proletarian revolutions worldwide.

Mistakes on the question of defense of the USSR most frequently flow from an incorrect understanding of the methods of "defense." Defense of the USSR does not at all mean rapprochement with the Kremlin bureaucracy, the acceptance of its politics, or a conciliation with the politics of her allies. In this question, as in all others, we remain completely on the ground of the international class struggle....

We are not a government party; we are the party of irreconcilable opposition, not only in capitalist countries but also in the USSR. Our tasks, among them the "defense of the USSR," we realize not through the medium of bourgeois governments and not even through the government of the USSR, but exclusively through the education of the masses through agitation, through explaining to the workers what they should defend and what they should overthrow. Such a "defense" cannot give immediate miraculous results. But we do not even pretend to be miracle workers. As things stand, we are a revolutionary minority. Our work must be directed so that the workers on whom we have influence should correctly appraise events, not permit themselves to be caught unawares, and prepare the general sentiment of their own class for the revolutionary solution of the tasks confronting us.

The defense of the USSR coincides for us with the preparation of world revolution. Only those methods are permissible which do not conflict with the interests of the revolution. The defense of the USSR is related to the world socialist revolution as a tactical task is related to a strategic one. A tactic is subordinated to a strategic goal and in no case can be in contradiction to the latter.

—Leon Trotsky, "The USSR in War," 25 September 1939, reprinted in *In Defense of Marxism* (1995)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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DIRECTOR OF PARTY PUBLICATIONS: Alison Spencer

EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Jeff Thomas

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No. 837 — 26 November 2004

Defend Antiwar Activist Mary Kelly!

Ireland

Dublin
6 November 2004

Dear comrades,

We wanted to bring to the attention of your readers the court case of courageous antiwar activist Mary Kelly. On October 28, Mary, a 52-year-old nurse and mother of four, was found guilty of "criminal damage without lawful excuse" for damaging a U.S. military aircraft at Shannon Airport on 29 January 2003. Her sentencing is scheduled for December 1 and she faces up to *ten years in prison*. She admits striking the aircraft on the nose cone, landing gear and engine cowl with an axe but argued in her defence that "I did what I have done with lawful excuse" to save human life and to prevent Shannon Airport being used to support the invasion of Iraq. Nearly 113,000 U.S. troops have been transported through Shannon in the first nine months of this year. It is estimated that by the end of the year, just under 350,000 U.S. troops will have passed through Shannon in the past three years (i.e., since the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq). Mary Kelly argues that this use of Shannon is a violation of both the Irish constitution and international law.

Her first trial, in June 2003, ended in a hung jury on the criminal damage charge, despite Judge Carroll Moran basically instructing the jury to convict her. However, the Director of Public Prosecutions ordered that she be tried again. Her second trial, in June 2004, collapsed when her legal team abandoned her because they refused to pursue the defence she wanted, in particular asking for disclosure of the advice given by the Attorney General to the government regarding the legality of allowing the U.S. imperialists basically unlimited access to Shannon Airport. In her latest trial (again before Judge Moran) she was forced to defend herself because she was unable to obtain new counsel who would defend her in accordance with her wishes. Judge Moran gutted her whole defence by ruling that "You can't call evidence on political matters or the war in Iraq" and refused her permission to call expert witnesses like former UN weapons inspector Denis Halliday, who was to testify about the thousands of deaths caused by U.S. bombing of Iraq and the UN-sanctioned starvation sanctions. The Irish state is intent on making an example of Mary Kelly because her actions exposed the complicity of the Irish government in the U.S./British colonial war against Iraq. From the perspective of workers and the oppressed, Mary's actions were not a crime! *Drop the charges! Hands off Mary Kelly!*

Irish Times

The Spartacist Group Ireland have contributed to her legal defence and have highlighted her case (and those of other antiwar protesters like Eoin Dubsky and

continued on page 9

19th Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

The Partisan Defense Committee is building for the 19th annual Holiday Appeal for class-war prisoners. The PDC provides monthly stipends to 16 prisoners—trade-union militants, fighters for black freedom and opponents of imperialism and capitalist militarism—and holiday gifts for them and their families. These gifts and messages of solidarity are a necessary reminder to these brothers and sisters that they are not forgotten.

The Holiday Appeal takes place as Bush, Cheney & Co. gear up for four more years of grinding attacks on labor, immigrants, blacks, gays, women and what remains of the Bill of Rights. Union activists, opponents of the imperialist occupation of Iraq, fighters for black rights, and even the lawyers who defend them in court, are faced with the threat of prison. Our benefits in New York, Chicago, the Bay Area and Toronto will be a forum for those in the cross hairs of this all-sided reaction.

A key focus of the Holiday Appeals this year will be the struggle to free death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. No case better expresses the bloodlust and depravity of American capitalism's judicial frame-up machine than Jamal's case. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist, Jamal was framed up on charges of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981 and sentenced to death. Despite the sworn confession of the real killer, recantation of prosecution witnesses, irrefutable proof of the trial judge's racist bias, and the prosecution's racist jury-rigging, coercion of witnesses, doctoring and concealing of evidence, Jamal remains in the shadow of [illegible]'s death chamber.

Jamal's case cuts to the core of black oppression in the U.S. The case of Mumia, a black man set up to be legally lynched through state-sanctioned murder, throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. The racist rulers of this country—Democrat as well as Republican—want Jamal's execution as a message to anyone who would fight against the ravages of this capitalist system. *Free Mumia now!*

ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!

COC Productions

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

Speaking at the New York benefit will be Monique Code, representative for Mumia's son, Jamal Hart, imprisoned on bogus firearms charges for speaking out in his father's defense. We are also happy to announce that leftist attorney Lynne Stewart will address the New York benefit. Stewart is currently fighting a sinister "terrorism" smear by the government that could send her to prison for up to 40 years. As the attorney for a reactionary Egyptian cleric imprisoned on charges stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Stewart, as well as her translator and paralegal, are now charged with providing material support to terrorist activity. This frame-up threatens everyone. If attorneys cannot provide legal defense for the accused without being charged with the crimes themselves, there will be no right to legal defense. *Defend Lynne Stewart, Mohammed Yousry and Ahmed Abdel Sattar! Drop the charges now!*

We urge *WV* readers to support the work of the PDC. Come to the benefits and dig deep to contribute to this necessary class-struggle defense work. Victims of capitalist repression are to be found in all corners of the globe, and must not be abandoned. We seek to build a class-struggle legal defense organization that all workers, all class-war prisoners and victims of racist persecution and brutality look to as their own. We need your help to sustain this work. ***Become a sustaining contributor to help drive the work of the PDC forward!*** Contributions can be sent to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.

New York

Friday, December 10
6 to 11 p.m.
Live jazz with the Bern Nix Trio and special guests Oliver Lake, Anthony Coleman, Roy Campbell and others
6 Harrison St. (at Hudson)
Manhattan
Take 1 or 9 subway to Franklin St.
$10 Advance • $15 At the door
For more information (212) 406-4252

Bay Area

Sunday, December 5
1 to 4 p.m.
Centro del Pueblo
474 Valencia St.
San Francisco
Near 16th/Mission BART
$10 • $5 Student/Unemployed
For more information (510) 839-0852

Chicago

Sunday, December 12
3 to 7 p.m.
United Electrical Hall
37 South Ashland (at Monroe)
$5 Advance • $8 At the door • $10 Contributing
For more information (312) 563-0442

Toronto

Saturday, December 11
7 to 10 p.m.
Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil St.
$5 Advance • $8 At the door
For more information (416) 593-4138

"Our Political Prisoners Stand on the Side of History"

Ray Levasseur Released

We are very happy to report that this month Ray Luc Levasseur, a class-war prisoner for 20 years, was finally released from the halfway house he was paroled to in August, and is now home in Maine with his family. We print below a letter he wrote thanking his many supporters. The Partisan Defense Committee has for many years been proud to number Ray Luc Levasseur among our stipend and Holiday Appeal recipients. Like Jaan Laaman, another class-war prisoner whose fight for freedom continues, Ray was part of the Ohio 7, leftist activists convicted for their role in a radical group that took credit for "bank expropriations" and bombings in the late 1970s and '80s against symbols of U.S. imperialism such as military and corporate offices. From the standpoint of the working class, the actions of the Ohio 7 against U.S. imperialism and racist injustice are not crimes, and these courageous activists should not have served a day in prison. In solidarity with these fighters, the PDC highlights their cases and those of other class-war prisoners. As Ray noted in a November 6 letter to the PDC and its supporters, "The PDC goes beyond 'talking the talk' and puts into practice nonsectarian support of political prisoners. I encourage all who are concerned about the plight of political prisoners to contribute to the PDC—who maintain a solid record of support for those imprisoned for political offenses."

Portland Press Herald

December 16th Committee

Left: Levasseur embraced by his wife, Jamila, as he enters halfway house this summer. Above: Class-war prisoner Jaan Laaman with Levasseur in prison.

November, 2004

Dear friends,

On August 6 I was transferred from the U.S. penitentiary at Atlanta to a pre-release center in Portland, Maine. On November 4th I was released from the federal bureau of prisons custody. After 20 years confinement I've finally come home.

I am deeply grateful to all of you who've supported me during this excruciating ordeal. Some of you have been around since the first day of my capture in 1984. Others became involved during court trials attempting to criminalize actions taken in support of struggles from Central America to Southern Africa. Some of you came through during the lockdown years at Marion and ADX—prisons continually violating the spirit and law of human rights. Others joined in during the quest for parole. Be it cards, letters, phone calls, books, literature, funds, political events, providing various kinds of support—each of you contributed in some way to my survival, enabling me to reach the dawn of a new life.

My release after 20 years imprisonment for political offenses demonstrates that political prisoners *can* be brought home. Do not forget those left behind. Mumia is still on death row. The MOVE prisoners have endured over 25 years of unjust imprisonment. Mutulu Shakur, Oscar Lopez, Marilyn Buck and many others are weighed down by inordinately long sentences. A new generation of political prisoners needs support—from younger activists like Jeff "Free" Luers to immigrants detained in the extended post 911 repression.

I make special mention of my codefendants—Tom Manning, Richard Williams and Jaan Laaman. Of 8 of us charged with United Freedom Front actions, they are the only 3 remaining in prison. That's "freedom," as in what these comrades fought for on behalf of others. They deserve respect and support. All our political prisoners need to be brought home.

One does not pass through 2 decades in America's maximum security cells without feeling its effects. The voices still reverberate from those I knew that died in prison. The sun is shining but shadows around me bear decades of physical and emotional pain. I remember hunger strikes and beatings; the sickening sounds of violence and the creeping silence of box car cells. I know the medical neglect suffered by some of our prisoners. I remember a world apart within which the spirit of political prisoners remains unbroken, and the circle of life survives the house of the dead. America's political prisoners are among the most principled people it's ever been my honor to know.

I was never a victim. I am a survivor of wars fought for and against U.S. imperialism. I believe that *our* political prisoners stand on the side of history that will vindicate our actions to alleviate the suffering of those most used and abused by a system that prioritizes profit over human needs. However, I am an anti-imperialist whose military role has ended.

I am now home with my wife Jamila and close to my family, including daughters, grandchildren and mother. From my heart I thank you all, for what you gave helped in some way to make this return home possible.

Love and respect,
Ray Luc Levasseur

Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!

The Spectre of Tiananmen and Working-Class Struggle in China Today

We print below, slightly edited for publication, the conclusion of an October 9 forum in Oakland, California by Spartacist League spokesman Keith Markin. Part One appeared in WV *No. 836 (12 November).*

PART TWO

The occupation of Tiananmen began with a memorial gathering for former Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secretary general Hu Yaobang, who had died on April 15. Hu had been widely respected for the simple fact that he was one of the few leading officials not personally tainted with corruption. Teams of youth took their demands to working-class neighborhoods to stress that they did "not oppose the government or the party."

By May 4, 300,000 people had flocked to Tiananmen. It was the 70th anniversary of the May 4th Movement of 1919, which began with anti-imperialist student demonstrations and led to the founding of the Chinese Communist Party two years later. At the 4 May 1989 protest students and workers were singing together the revolutionary workers' anthem, the "Internationale." Following the May 4 protest, student leaders—without any social power and fearful of mobilizing the working class—decided to launch a hunger strike to force concessions from the government.

Sympathy with the hunger strikers led to another huge demonstration on May 17. At this demonstration, there was massive participation of factory workers from around Beijing. The students, with very little social power, had sparked the seething economic discontent of the Chinese proletariat. The workers wanted to do something about the attacks on their "iron rice bowl" of previously guaranteed jobs and social benefits, and about rising inflation. They began organizing independently of the bureaucracy, like the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation (BWAF). The BWAF demanded a wage increase, price stabilization, and opposed corruption within the CCP. They called to "make public the personal incomes and possessions of top party officials." The social power of the working class gave the protests their potentially revolutionary nature.

Li Peng, hatchet man for Deng Xiaoping and his regime, went to Capital Iron and Steel to discourage and intimidate workers there sympathetic to the students' protest. It was the threat of a general strike that led Li and Deng to declare martial law on May 20. The 38th Army was ordered to put down the so-called "counterrevolutionary" uprising. However, these troops were based in Beijing and refused to move on the crowds.

The fledgling Chinese workers organizations began to organize resistance to the declaration of martial law. They formed "workers picket corps" and "dare to die" teams to protect protesting students against repression. Students and workers fraternized with the troops. The streets of Beijing were crowded with ordinary people arguing about politics, expressing their opinions on the way forward. The police vanished from the streets.

Peter Turnley

Beijing, May 1989: Workers and students fraternize with troops called in to suppress uprising which marked incipient political revolution against Stalinist regime.

After governmental authority in Beijing evaporated, workers groups began to take on responsibility for public safety, taking over essential services like transporting food and other vital necessities. A group of People's Liberation Army generals sent a letter of protest to Deng Xiaoping. The army was politically split. Not horizontally, as in a social revolution where the ranks split from the officers, but vertically. This is what an incipient proletarian political revolution looks like. For two weeks the order of martial law was not implemented.

On June 3, Deng was able to mobilize the 27th Army to implement the orders for martial law. The bloodletting began. It is reported that when the troops reached Tiananmen in the early morning of June 4, their first target was the workers' station at the western end. One student leader saw tanks flatten the tents of the BWAF, killing 20 people. In contrast to the war waged against the working people of the city, most of the students were allowed to leave Tiananmen Square without punitive actions being taken.

Why the savage repression at the very first signs of working-class protest? The Stalinist bureaucracy is a parasitic caste resting upon a collectivized economy. The bureaucrats do not *own* the means of production. They do not have the myriad threads of social control of a ruling capitalist class, such as the right to pass property ownership to their children. Their power stems from monopolizing political control of the governing apparatus. Since they claim to rule in the name of the workers, they cannot tolerate any independent workers organization. Any real workers movement necessarily challenges the legitimacy of the Stalinist bureaucracy. This is the contradiction of every deformed workers state.

The exact toll of the massacre is impossible to determine, but it is likely that several thousand were killed or wounded. Yet the army's terror failed to quell the rebellion. In fact, it served to generalize proletarian resistance, at first, as "dare to die" corps erupted all over China. Protests spread to over 80 cities, and that was only the official count. However, lacking a cohered leadership, the uprising was eventually smashed through state repression. One prominent U.S. left group, Workers World, actually defended the massacre, rehashing Deng Xiaoping's lie that the protesters were counterrevolutionary and for bourgeois democracy. That also happened to be the line of the bourgeoisie internationally. During this period, this is what *WV* said: On May 26, "Upheaval in China: Oust the Bureaucrats—For Lenin's Communism! Workers and Soldiers Soviets Must Rule!" (*WV* No. 478). On June 9, "Beijing Massacre—Civil War Looms; For the Unity of China Under the Leadership of the Workers!" (*WV* No. 479). On June 23, "Defend Chinese Workers! Stop the Executions!" (*WV* No. 480).

The Lessons of Tiananmen

Wang Hui argues in his article "The 1989 Social Movement and the Historical Roots of China's Neoliberalism": "The direct cause of the movement's failure was violent suppression by the state. However, the indirect cause lay in the movement's own inability to bridge the gap between its demands for political democracy and the demands for social equality that had been its mobilizing force." This is very perceptive. What political program could bridge this gap?

During the Cultural Revolution, society was polarized between students and workers. At Tiananmen, both students and workers protested together, not without their differences, against the bureaucracy. Only a Leninist and Trotskyist party fighting for a proletarian political revolution could have bridged the gap between the demands for political democracy and social equality. But the workers groups did not go beyond upholding "democracy" as freedom from bureaucratic constraint. A revolutionary party that could instill the lessons of past struggles into the political consciousness of the workers was necessary.

The two weeks during which the army refused to implement martial law were a critical juncture. There was a political vacuum. Even a tiny Chinese Bolshevik organization could have been decisive in 1989, especially during those two weeks. The nascent situation of dual power—in which working people were beginning to take control of the cities in their own hands—needed to be developed into a fight for political power. This would have meant struggling to transform the informal workers assemblies into workers councils open to all except openly counterrevolutionary tendencies.

Lenin described soviets (workers councils) as "the direct organization of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organize and administer their own state in every possible way." Migrant workers would be critical to help spread this type of organization into rural communities. Coordinated nationally, these organizations could have been the basis for a revolutionary regime of workers democracy counterposed to the Stalinists and pledged to fight to the death against capitalist restoration.

Because there was a lack of clear leadership, overtly reactionary elements were allowed on some occasions to make their voices heard, including some who raised slogans in favor of the Guomindang. Socialist aspirations were often mixed with great illusions in the U.S. and bourgeois democracy—exemplified by the "Goddess of Democracy" statue. But from the beginning, the protesters' demands, centrally for more democratic rights and an end to corruption, were egalitarian in nature and within the framework of a workers state. Workers marched into Tiananmen Square carrying pictures of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, not Chiang Kai-shek.

In order to win workers, soldiers and students, a Bolshevik party would have to argue head-on against the nationalism of "socialism in one country" and clarify

For Proletarian Political Revolution!

the fact that Mao and Deng were merely two sides of the same anti-Soviet bureaucratic coin. It would have been important to make an appeal to the workers of the world for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe, China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. A political revolution in China would have been a spark for the workers of the world, from Japan and South Korea to West Europe and the U.S., but especially in the Soviet Union.

In an interview published by *Revolutionary Worker* in 1999 (they recently reprinted it this June), Li Minqi, a student protester at Tiananmen in 1989, explains the lessons he learned from the uprising and how he was won to what he believes was Marxism (that is, a "sort of neo-Maoism): "Initially I shared the general dominance of bourgeois ideology among Chinese students. The student movement did not expect to become a mass democratic movement. But by May 17, when the workers really came into the streets, I began to realize that this was totally different from what I expected. I was saying to myself: this is more and more like a revolutionary situation."

Explaining his political development, Li says: "In the movement, I already sensed that something was wrong. The student leadership did not dare to mobilize the workers, did not dare take steps to organize to take political power, and that resulted in the failure of the movement. So I began to rethink what I had believed, what I had taken for granted—Western ideology and Western-style democracy. I began to think maybe some alternative ideas are needed. And the most obvious alternative idea is Marxism."

Li was arrested by the Deng regime and spent two years in prison. He's now an émigré. Without seeing an alternative to Maoism, Li drew some wrong conclusions from the defeat. He blames the increased nationalism in China on the new Chinese capitalism. This is wrong on two counts: China isn't capitalist, and "socialism in one country" is the basis for today's Chinese nationalism. In a dialogue transcribed in *One China, Many Paths*, when Li was asked about his view of China's war with Vietnam in 1979, he said he had nothing to say on the issue. But Li's experience shows how the impact of the working class wielding its social power during Tiananmen changed the political consciousness of some students. With a revolutionary Marxist leadership, the working class can change the course of history.

The Spectre of Tiananmen, the Intelligentsia and Working-Class Struggle Today

A few years after crushing the uprising, the bureaucracy went on the offensive with their market policies. Between 1993 and 1999, protests against the market reforms quadrupled. By the late '90s, there was a divergence within the Chinese intelligentsia reflecting the renewed social struggle against the market reforms: neoliberal intellectuals and hardliners within the CCP essentially support the repression at Tiananmen. They argue that if the movement had not been stopped, China would not have become a wealthier nation. The neoliberal intellectuals dubbed their antagonists the "New Left" to imply they are Marxists, because the "New Left" opposed the worsening conditions of the masses. They opposed the repression of the Tiananmen uprising, too.

The neoliberals complain that there hasn't been enough privatization and that, therefore, China is still "socialist." The "New Left" believes there is enough privatization to call China capitalist. Wang Hui recognizes, however, that China is not like other capitalist states because it was the only state to navigate successfully through the 1997-98 East Asian financial/economic crises. Wang says that this is because of the nation-state. But Thailand and South Korea were nation-states, too. Wang Hui believes that internationalism and Marxism are old-fashioned.

It is the collectivized property that is responsible for the ability of China to have navigated successfully through that financial/economic crisis. Continued state ownership of the financial system has enabled the Beijing regime up to now to effectively (though not totally) control the flow of money-capital in and out of mainland China. China's currency, the yuan (also called the renminbi) is not freely convertible. It is not traded (legally) in international currency markets.

Knowledgeable spokesmen for Western imperialism recognize that the privatization and especially internationalization of the financial system is a necessary step in breaking the CCP regime's grip on the banks. However, the bureaucracy can't control the fact that the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong is an ever-widening breach through which illegal currency transactions flow in both directions. The expropriation of Hong Kong's financiers and other sections of its bourgeoisie is vitally necessary to protect China's economy from the destructive onslaught of the imperialist bankers.

Referring to the savage privatizations that followed the counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union, Wang Hui commented on the debate about amending the Chinese constitution to render "private property rights inviolable": "A decade later, the question of property rights has become the most pivotal social issue in China. The principle that private property

Following bloody suppression of Tiananmen uprising, Beijing bureaucracy singled out workers for repression. Signs accuse two workers of "rumor mongering."

Wolf/Visum

Unemployed workers in Shenyang, part of China's "rust belt."

should receive protection under the law does not divide intellectuals." Wang Hui understands that the key question is private property, but he and the "New Left" draw the wrong conclusion. Their difference with the neoliberals is *how one gets the property*. The neoliberals condone illegal expropriations; the "New Left" is opposed. This amounts to being for capitalism with a human face. Where Wang runs into his own contradictions is on the question of privatizing land. He recognizes that if land were privatized, ordinary peasants would be ruined overnight. Marxists understand that the only class, besides the poor peasants themselves, whose interests are against the privatization of the land is the proletariat.

The National People's Congress, this spring, passed a law that stated: "Citizens' lawful private property is inviolable." It was only a matter of time before such a law was passed. Last year they legitimized party membership for entrepreneurs. In fact, that law did not introduce a significant change in either the social composition of the CCP, which has 66 million members, or its functional ideology. According to an official survey, of China's two million private business owners, 600,000 are party members and have been for some time. The overwhelming majority of these were long-time CCP managerial cadre who took over the small state-owned enterprises they were running when these were privatized over the past several years.

State-owned industrial enterprises can to a degree be buffered from increased import competition by additional government financing via the banks. But there is no way that China's peasant smallholders can compete with the capital-intensive, scientifically managed agribusiness of the U.S. and other major food-exporting countries. The basic line of the regime's agrarian policy is not to protect the multitude of peasant smallholders. It is rather to move toward large-scale, de facto privately owned farms.

Ultimately, the only way to resolve the shortage of arable land in China in the interests of workers and poor peasants is by extending the revolution to an industrially advanced capitalist state like Japan. But the bureaucracy is opposed to this perspective. In the meantime, a government based on workers and peasants' councils would not only prohibit or restrict the hiring of labor and leasing of additional land by rich farmers, but it would also promote the recollectivization of agriculture. It would propose material incentives, like the best tractors and chemical fertilizers, and offer reduced taxes and cheaper credits to peasants who joined collectives. An increase in agricultural productivity would raise the need for a huge expansion of industrial jobs in urban areas to absorb the vast surplus of labor no longer needed in the countryside. Clearly, this would involve a lengthy process, particularly given the limited size and relatively low level of productivity of China's industrial base.

Realizing this perspective hinges on the aid that China would receive from a socialist Japan or a socialist America. You see, all roads lead to the necessity of international revolution. Both the dire living conditions suffered by Chinese peasants and their view that conditions will only get worse is the reason why over the last decade China has seen many large-scale peasant protests and riots, especially against increased taxation and corruption.

An indication of serious problems for the Stalinist bureaucracy was reported in a *Herald Tribune* article (3 June): "In contrast to Tiananmen in 1989, the police increasingly admit that most demonstrators are motivated by legitimate grievances against rapacious managers and corrupt local officials, and are not just pawns of anti-Communist conspirators. Conceding that protest is widespread and enjoys growing popular sympathy, the police are scrambling to learn new anti-protest techniques aimed at containing and defusing, rather than brutally squelching, demonstrations."

The bureaucracy's pace of market reforms is limited by its fear of the proletariat, especially the spectre of another Tiananmen. Fuxin, which is northwest of Shenyang, in the northeast, by late 2000 had produced 530 million tons of coal. That's enough to fill trucks with 60 tons each and line them up end to end until they encircled the Earth 4.3 times! On January 31, 2003, Wen Jiahao spent the Chinese New Year's Eve together with miners 720 meters underground. He had a very good reason. Official statistics claim that 200,000 of the Fuxin Mining Bureau's 400,000 miners have been laid off. One article points out: "In the workers' way of thinking, there is one bond that may not be broken: China's mining resources belong to the state, and 'the working class is the master of the state and the master of industry,' so why is it that in actual experience the 'masters' jobs can be bought off one by one in exchange for a paltry 'subsistence provision'?"

This goes to the heart of the contradictions of the Chinese deformed workers state. The following examples show that a section of the working class sees the necessity of defending collectivized property, they understand that capitalism has not yet been restored, but their political consciousness has real limitations and contradictions.

In another interesting article, entitled "Industrial Restructuring and Workers' Resistance in China," Feng Chen (of Hong Kong Baptist University) describes how workers in the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have different perceptions of property rights than workers in private enterprises. The latter primarily strike for wages and the conditions of their labor, whereas some SOE workers are concerned over the question of forms of property and corresponding property relations when

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China: Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!

Two-part article from *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December 2003

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Profit System Undermines Public Health

Capitalist Greed and the Flu Vaccine Shortage

Jason DeCrow

Elderly endure long waits for flu shots at senior center in Queens Village, New York.

The following is a contribution by Mark K., a longtime sympathizer of the Spartacist League.

Once again the nation faces a flu vaccine crisis, now an annual event which cannot be blamed simply on technical problems of production—it is an indictment of the workings of capitalism itself. The suspension of Chiron Corporation's manufacturing license for flu vaccine because of contamination problems in their British factory leaves only one manufacturer (Aventis Pasteur) remaining, cutting the available supply nearly in half to 55 million doses. This is not enough to provide protection for the population, and poses the danger that *people will die* needlessly. On average, *36,000* people are killed every year by flu in the U.S. even when the immunization program has ample supplies.

Yet the head of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Dr. Julie Gerberding, outrageously decreed, "This is not an emergency" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 October)! This is criminal government negligence bordering on insanity, like Nero fiddling while Rome burned, and it's rooted in the Bush administration's fanatical worship of the "free market." Echoing Gerberding, U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) secretary Tommy Thompson went on CNN (18 October) to reiterate that this is "not a health crisis." "We want people to relax," he said in an incredibly stupid statement at a Tampa, Florida news conference (not coincidentally in a key swing state before the presidential election). "The flu season is not here.... This is not an emergency *right now*" (*Miami Herald*, 18 October, emphasis added).

Any rational government would respond to such a medical emergency with emergency measures: *Seize* all the remaining flu vaccine supply and let a committee of doctors distribute it according to medical need. But the CDC and HHS explicitly rejected this course of action: Gerberding "insisted repeatedly at a midafternoon press conference that the federal government would not seize the 55.4 million doses now expected to be available and compel their redistribution" because, she said, it's "not a realistic strategy" and would be "disruptive" (*Boston Globe*, 7 October). Thompson echoed that government line with virtually the same words. Forcible government intervention is off the table because their capitalist masters won't stand for its "disruptive" effect on *profits*, hence it's not "realistic." Different capitalist governments react to social crises differently. Canada and Britain, for example, have national health care systems, though dilapidated and replete with problems. In contrast, the twin parties of American capitalism have repeatedly rejected the creation of a national health care system, making the U.S. the most backward of industrial countries.

Without presenting any emergency plans, Thompson simply told the elderly not to wait in long lines, but "come back another day"! This did nothing to stem the growing panic among seniors who scrambled to find vaccine. One elderly woman in the Bay Area died waiting in line when she fainted and hit her head. Playing with statistics in his pre-election Tampa news conference, Thompson cynically boasted that there has been an actual "increase" in vaccinations in recent years due to administration efforts—disappearing the fact that this year's truncated supply is vastly below the necessary minimum, and the irrational distribution system combined with escalating panic will greatly exacerbate the shortage among high-risk groups. The government is not concerned: one is reminded of Scrooge's contemptuous line (in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*) that if people are going to die, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

As a sign of the utter failure of "free market" medicine, the CDC impotently issued *voluntary* guidelines advising that the vaccine be given first to those who are most at risk—people over 65, children under 2, those with chronic diseases—even while the remaining doses were *already* being distributed by private suppliers, and anybody with 20 bucks could get it at local pharmacies regardless of their health condition, at least until panic set in and/or the supplies ran out. By mid-October, hospitals were reporting that some distributors were trying to sell bulk supplies of vaccine, normally about $8 per shot, for *$60 to $100 per shot* or more—"entrepreneurship" in Bush's world. Meanwhile, with an aristocratic haughtiness worthy of Marie Antoinette, Senate majority leader (and doctor) Bill Frist openly ignored the CDC guidelines by sending "letters urging his 99 colleagues to get the shots" (AP, 20 October), and all 535 members of Congress could get them *for free*. In an ironic twist, the Bush administration is considering importing vaccine from Canada—even as they try to prevent seniors from buying lower-priced drugs there!

This is a crisis created by capitalist "market forces." One by one, vaccine manufacturers have dropped out of producing flu vaccine because they didn't find the "market" to be profitable enough. Only a few years ago there were four manufacturers, but today there are only two, so any problems in production create immediate disaster. Furthermore, the distribution system is almost entirely in private hands, leading to more profiteering. In 2000 there was a scandal when the media reported that the year's flu vaccine was "first going to private businesses that paid top dollar for them, relegating public health programs that vaccinate the poor and elderly to the back of the line" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 October 2000). The *Wall Street Journal* (18 October) captured the corporate mindset with the headline, "Flu Season Threatens Productivity."

Emergency Room Physicians Warn of "Public Health Disaster"

But the physicians who man the front lines in the emergency rooms are urging emergency action by the government. "The potential exists for a public health disaster this winter," said Dr. Arthur Kellermann of Emory University's Department of Medicine (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 October). He was speaking at a press conference in San Francisco during the annual meeting of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), which issued a press release (18 October) headlined, "Flu Vaccine Shortage Could Result in Significant Patient Deaths, Unless Swift Actions Are Taken."

How many deaths? That depends on a lot of variables, including the unpredictable factor of whether the flu season is mild or severe, but government health agencies are supposed to plan for the worst scenarios. In the Bay Area's Alameda County, which includes the Oakland/Berkeley area, "health officials estimate that nearly four times as many people could die from the flu this season because of the vaccine shortage" (InsideBayArea.com, 2 November).

If we apply that factor of four across the country, it suggests well over *100,000* extra deaths! This will disproportionately hit blacks and Hispanics due to the racial disparity in health care access in the U.S. For instance, the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (10 October 2003) compares the average vaccination rates by race/ethnicity for the over-65 group in the years 1989-2001, and this shows the black rate about *one quarter lower* than the white rate in the latest years, with the Hispanic rate only slightly above the black rate. So not surprisingly, the American Lung Association reported last August, "In 2001, blacks were 26% more likely to die from pneumonia and influenza than whites."

It could get much worse if we get hit by a radically new strain of influenza virus. The target of the annual vaccine is really based on an educated guess as to what strain may hit us. The wily flu virus is constantly mutating into new forms, and every ten to forty years it comes up with something so radically new that it causes a worldwide pandemic. The most catastrophic one in the past century was the 1918-19 "Spanish flu" which killed 20 to 50 million people worldwide, half a million in the U.S., and was so powerful that it killed many healthy young adults. There have been only two pandemics since then, both much less serious: the 1957-58 "Asian flu" and the 1968-69 "Hong Kong flu." So we are overdue, and scientists are worriedly studying the recent outbreaks of "bird flu" among people in Asia for fear that the virus could "pass" from birds to humans on a far greater scale and then between humans, which would be devastating. This year's flu vaccine may already be partly outmoded: The targeted strain is A/Fujian, but already a new strain is spreading in New Zealand, dubbed A/Wellington, though the consensus is that the current vaccine will provide partial protection against this new strain. But the shortage of vaccine exacerbates the vulnerabilities.

ACEP warns that the nation's emergency rooms, already overloaded under normal conditions, could be swamped in

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National Museum of Health

Culver

Catastrophic flu pandemic of 1918-19 killed over 20 million people. Hospital wards and morgues filled as half a million died in U.S.

Young Spartacus

Every new generation of revolutionaries must learn and apply the historical lessons and traditions of the Marxist movement in order to cohere a cadre later capable of carrying forward the fight for world socialism. Leon Trotsky, a leader of the Russian Revolution, said about political education in a June 1932 letter to Bolshevik-Leninist youth in Spain:

"I learned with joy that you are undertaking the publication of your own paper. A revolutionary tendency that does not educate the youth will die stillborn. In the present world, communism is the only task of great magnitude that demands a whole series of generations for its complete realization. The proletarian revolution requires continuity. To assure this continuity is the mission of the youth; that is to say, it is your mission. Marxism shows how this is to be done.

"The strength of Marxism is in the unity of scientific theory with revolutionary struggle. On these two rails, the education of the communist youth should progress. The study of Marxism outside the revolutionary struggle can create bookworms but not revolutionaries. Participation in the revolutionary struggle without the study of Marxism is unavoidably full of danger, uncertainty, half-blindness. To study Marxism as a Marxist is possible only by participating in the life and struggle of the class, revolutionary theory is verified by practice, and practice is clarified by theory. Only the truths of Marxism that are conquered in struggle enter the mind and the blood."

—Trotsky, "To the Spanish Youth," *The Spanish Revolution* (1973)

Young Spartacus photos

Clockwise from top left: *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive, North Carolina, 2000. Spartacist contingent at San Francisco antiwar demo, March 2004. New York SYC campus speakout against racist provocation, March 2004. SYC with striking grocery workers outside L.A., October 2003.

SYC Ten Point Program

The Spartacus Youth Clubs intervene into social struggles armed with the revolutionary internationalist program of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We work to mobilize youth in struggle as partisans of the working class, championing the liberation of black people, women and all the oppressed. The SYCs fight to win youth to the perspective of building the Leninist vanguard party that will lead the working class in socialist revolution, laying the basis for a world free of capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter.

1 Mobilize students behind the social power of the multiracial working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programs! For union hiring halls! Down with union-busting "workfare" schemes! Jobs for all at union wages! Organize the unorganized! Unionize the South! Down with multi-tier wages, which pit younger and older workers against each other! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Keep the bosses' government and courts out of the unions!

2 Black oppression is the bedrock of racist American capitalism. Finish the Civil War! For black liberation through socialist revolution! For mass labor/black mobilizations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defense! No reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians! Fascist terror is not a question of "free speech." Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK!

3 For free, quality, integrated public education for all! Nationalize the private universities! Down with the racist purge of higher education—defend affirmative action, no to tuition hikes! No to budget cuts! For an end to tracking! For open admissions, no tuition and a state-paid living stipend for all students! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Down with police occupation of public schools! Cops off campus!

4 For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For mass, labor-backed mobilizations to defend abortion clinics! Down with parental consent laws and "squeal rules"! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour childcare! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with anti-gay laws! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Full democratic rights for homosexuals! Government out of the bedroom! Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Down with all laws against consensual activities, called "crimes without victims," like pornography, gambling, drug use, prostitution and "statutory rape"!

5 Down with racist anti-immigrant laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Organize foreign-born workers into the unions! No deportations! No to racist "English only" laws! Down with anti-Hispanic, anti-Arab, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry!

6 Down with the "war on terror," which is a war aimed at immigrants, labor, the left and minorities! Free all the detainees! Abolish the racist death penalty! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Defend victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! No illusions in civilian review boards or "community control" of the police! For labor mobilizations against racist cop terror! Down with the "war on drugs," a racist war by the ruling class against black and Hispanic youth! The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organized violence by the capitalists against the workers and the oppressed. It must be smashed through workers revolution!

7 Defend separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Keep religion out of the schools! No prayer in the schools! Down with the teaching of creationism! For the teaching of evolution! No government funding for religious, private or "charter" schools!

8 Defeat U.S. imperialism through workers revolution! U.S. and allied forces out of Iraq now! Down with the colonial occupation! For class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers at home! No illusions in the UN—a den of imperialist thieves, their victims and their lackeys! All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans, Afghanistan, Haiti! For the right of independence for Puerto Rico! U.S. troops out of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean! U.S. imperialist butchers: hands off the world! No to the draft! Not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military! Drive ROTC, CIA and police recruiters off the campuses!

9 For international working-class solidarity! Down with the chauvinist poison of protectionism! Workers of the world, unite! For unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states of Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy, based on the power of workers councils, and revolutionary internationalism!

10 Break with the racist, warmongering Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism! For a revolutionary, multiracial workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October Revolutions! For the international rule of the working class!

The Spartacus Youth Clubs are the youth groups of the revolutionary Marxist Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).■

Spartacus Youth Club Events

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, December 11, 2 p.m.
Class: **The Russian Revolution**
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Vermont/Beverly Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

NEW YORK

Thursday, December 2, 7 p.m.
Video Showing and Discussion
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
Update on Mumia's case will follow showing of: *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*
Intercultural Resource Center
552 West 114th St. (Amsterdam & Broadway)
For more information: (212) 267-1025
or e-mail: nysl@compuserve.com

CHICAGO

Tuesday, November 30, 7 p.m.
Class: **"Globalization" or Imperialism?**
University of Chicago
Cobb Hall, Room 107, 5811 S. Ellis Ave
Information and readings: (312) 563-0441
or e-mail: spartacist@iname.com

BOSTON

Thursday, December 2, 6:30 p.m.
Class: **American Capitalism and the Struggle for Black Freedom:**
For Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!
Harvard University, Loker Common Memorial Hall Basement
Information and readings: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

Massad...

(continued from page 12)

which has included Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his lieutenant Paul Wolfowitz. The main force behind the right wing's bogus "academic freedom" campaign is racist ideologue David Horowitz. Horowitz carried out his own witchhunting tour of campuses in 2001, apologizing for slavery and attacking the gains of black struggle. He is involved in the highest councils of the Republican Party and is behind the grossly misnamed "Academic Bill of Rights." Horowitz touts the myth that conservatives are persecuted in American universities. The "Academic Bill of Rights" is in reality an attempt to provide the basis for a purge of the left from campuses, with demands for "duly authorized authorities" to snoop into tenure and hiring decisions. This bill was passed by the Georgia State Senate.

Disguising their witchhunt as a campaign for "academic freedom," this cabal of Zionist neocons, yellow journalists and government officials is in fact trampling the free speech rights of defenders of the Palestinian people, as well as any voice of dissent against racist U.S. imperialism. This includes leftists, radicals, black and minority students. *Columbia Unbecoming* specifically singles out the International Socialist Organization and attacks the campus left more generally.

Over 2,800 people have signed an Internet petition denouncing the attacks on Professor Massad. It is good that Massad's case has garnered support. The Spartacus Youth Club is signing this petition as an elementary act of solidarity with Massad, but we warn that the wording is based on a false conception that Columbia University is an ivory tower that exists to protect academic freedom. The petition states: "We call on President Bollinger to rise to the occasion and issue a categorical statement in defense of Professor Massad and against this campaign of defamation," and that these attacks "threaten the very ideal of a university as a place of open and vigorous intellectual exchanges." In fact, the "ideals" of elite universities like Columbia are to train the intelligentsia necessary for the maintenance of the capitalist system. This includes the next generation of cadre for the CIA and State Department, researchers for the "military-industrial complex" and union-busting lawyers. The campus administration exists to carry out this mission.

What is urgently necessary is for students and all those in the cross hairs of the witchhunt to mobilize in united-front protest in defense of the victimized professors and against the campus thought police.

Zionist Lies and Smears

The statement of Eric Posner, a former Israeli army medic and student of Massad's, demolishes the scurrilous charges in *Columbia Unbecoming*:

> "I am a Jew, an Israeli, a Jerusalemite, and an American. As opposed to the interviewees in the film, 'Unbecoming Columbia,' [*sic*] I am also a MEALAC major. Last year, I was approached by Ariel Be'ery [General Studies student body president and a Zionist activist involved in the film]. He wanted to hear my opinion about MEALAC and Massad, whose class I was enrolled in at the time. When I expressed my profound appreciation for Massad's critical approach and the multiplicity of perspectives that he offers in his classroom, *Be'ery told me that he wouldn't be calling me back for a taped interview*." [emphasis in original]

As an article in *Jewish Week* (29 October) based on interviews with more than two dozen other mostly Israeli and American Jewish MEALAC students stated: "Most of the complaints on campus appear to be from pro-Israel activist students not in the MEALAC program." According to Professor Massad's statement, only one of the students in the film even took his course.

The classic tool of the trade for the Zionists is the slander that anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism. Massad's statement eloquently repudiated this claim:

> "Unlike the pro-Israel groups, I do not think that Israeli actions are 'Jewish' actions or that they reflect the will of the Jewish people worldwide! All those pro-Israeli propagandists who want to reduce the Jewish people to the State of Israel are the anti-Semites who want to eliminate the existing pluralism among Jews. The majority of Israel's supporters in the United States are, in fact, not Jews but Christian fundamentalist anti-Semites who seek to convert Jews.... Therefore, it is not anti-Semitism that offends pro-Israel groups: what offends them is anti-Israel criticism."

In fact the Zionists have always reserved special venom for Jewish historians who defend Palestinian rights, like Joel Beinin and Norman Finkelstein.

Young Spartacus

Spartacist banner at April 2002 antiwar demo in Washington, D.C. Forthright defense of Palestinian people is key to defeating Zionist witchhunt.

The current wave of attacks on Columbia professors is part of an ominous mobilization going back years, which escalated after September 11. In 1985 the campus office of globally renowned Columbia professor and prominent Palestinian activist, the late Edward Said, was firebombed. In 2000, after Said tossed a stone into Israel from across the Lebanese border, in a symbolic act of celebration of the end of the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, the campus Zionists and the right-wing press, along with the *Columbia Spectator*, viciously attacked him (see "Columbia *Spectator* Witchhunts Edward Said," *WV* No. 743, 6 October 2000). Also the victim of a vicious witchhunt by the same reactionary forces was Professor Nicholas De Genova, for honorably speaking in favor of the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Iraq at a 2003 campus antiwar teach-in.

Now there is the International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003, or House Resolution (H.R.) 3077, which was passed unanimously by the House and awaits a vote in the Senate. Several Zionist organizations are behind this piece of legislation, including the Anti-Defamation League and American Israel Public Affairs Committee. It would, if passed, among other things, lead to the establishment of a government "advisory board" including representatives of national security agencies to oversee federally funded university programs, especially Middle East studies. Professor Rashid Khalidi warned: "If implemented as its proponents intend, it would impose the pseudo-sciences of terrorology and the demonization of Islam and Muslims as integral parts of teaching and research about the Middle East" (*In These Times* Web site, 11 December 2003). *Down with H.R. 3077!*

Defend the Palestinians!

Key to defeating the witchhunt against Columbia professors and MEALAC is forthrightly taking up the defense of the Palestinian people. While the recent Zionist attacks have been spearheaded by forces of the far right, the Democrats are no less staunch supporters of Zionism and Israel than the Republicans. The Spartacus Youth Clubs have been active in protests around the country in opposition to the Zionist attacks on professors and student groups, from the banning of the Students for Justice in Palestine at UC Berkeley to attempts to shut down conferences of the Palestine Solidarity Movement (see "Defend Pro-Palestinian Protesters!" *WV* No. 792, 29 November 2002).

The SYC intransigently defends the Palestinian people against Zionist state terror. At the same time, we defend the right of the Hebrew-speaking population as well to self-determination. Against all variants of nationalism, we counterpose a program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism. As we wrote in "Zionist Butchers Strike Gaza" (*WV* No. 834, 15 October): "The Palestinian nationalists have tried nearly everything to beat back the Israeli garrison state: from fighting to negotiating to appealing to the UN and Western imperialists, to now pathetically begging to simply be allowed to exist—and it has all been and will all be futile. So long as the national axis is emphasized, the situation will always be bleak and hopeless. But if the *class* axis is emphasized, there is at least a *realistic* chance at an equitable resolution."

The road to the social and national liberation of the Palestinian people lies through common class struggle by the Hebrew-speaking and Arab workers against both the Israeli and Arab ruling classes, who likewise are oppressors of the Palestinians. Only within a socialist federation of the Near East can the right to national self-determination for both the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples be equitably realized. The struggle to defend the Palestinian people must be linked to a fight against the U.S. imperialist occupation of Iraq. *For a socialist federation of the Near East! Down with the U.S. colonial occupation of Iraq! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! Down with the Zionist witchhunt on campus!* ■

Vanunu...

(continued from page 12)

release of all victims of Zionist state terror and the withdrawal of all Israeli troops and settlers from the Occupied Territories!

As a Sephardic Jew whose family had emigrated from Morocco, Vanunu's own experience of discrimination at the hands of the European-derived Ashkenazi establishment led to his active alienation from Zionism. As a student at Beersheba's Ben-Gurion University, he identified with the Palestinian students he met, and participated in protests for Palestinian equality and against the 1982 Lebanon war. Vanunu is further despised in Israel because of his conversion to Christianity in 1986. After his prison release, he sought refuge in the East Jerusalem church because of death threats from Israelis, and he has remarked that the Palestinians in the neighborhood have embraced him. He said in an interview with the London *Guardian* (15 November), "Since the second intifada, the reality is very, very bad. I used to have optimism but when I came out and saw the wall and saw the reality...young people who live here don't have any hope."

The U.S. bourgeoisie often repeats the refrain that their junior partner Israel is "the only democracy in the Middle East." The myriad prison torture chambers where Palestinian prisoners languish, the electric fences of Gaza, three-story-high concrete walls and checkpoints of the West Bank expose the lie of Israeli "democracy." Vanunu exposed that the vast majority of "weapons of mass destruction" in the Near East has been in the bloody hands of the Zionist garrison state, bankrolled for decades by the U.S. bourgeoisie.

The ICL and the Partisan Defense Committee have actively fought internationally for the release of Mordechai Vanunu. After the Israeli High Court of Justice in July upheld and extended every restriction of movement and speech on Vanunu, the PDC sent an August 7 letter of protest joining with all those outraged at the endless acts of vengeful repression. We stated: "Mordechai Vanunu should not have spent even one day behind bars. As we have said many times, all of humanity owes Vanunu a tremendous debt of gratitude." *Hands off Mordechai Vanunu! Down with the gag order! Let him leave Israel right now!* ■

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Falluja...

(continued from page 1)

Cutting water supplies to cities, starving civilians, deliberately killing the unarmed and wounded—all these are war crimes as stipulated by the Geneva Conventions, to which the U.S. is a signatory. But the only rule of war the U.S. recognizes is what it can get away with. Before capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92, fear of the Soviet nuclear arsenal stayed the hand of U.S. imperialism. Now, with a military arsenal that far outstrips any of its rivals, the U.S. is riding roughshod wherever it pleases. Emboldened by re-election, Bush is escalating the brutality of the American occupation in Iraq and is now brazenly saber rattling against Iran and North Korea. We insist that the North Korean deformed workers state has the right to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the American imperialists.

The veil of "neutrality" has to be ripped off the bloody face of the United Nations, whose sanctions against Iraq, imposed at the behest of the U.S. in 1990, killed ***one and a half million people***. This starvation blockade as well as the UN weapons inspections literally set the country up for rape and destruction by U.S. imperialism. Notably, the UN and the mainstream capitalist media kept an early appeal for help from Falluja's governing Shura Council a deep, dark secret. *CounterPunch* and the *Asia Times* published excerpts of a letter sent on October 14 to Kofi Annan by the Falluja Shura Council:

> "In Fallujah [the Americans] have created a new vague target: al-Zarqawi. Almost a year has elapsed since they created this new pretext and whenever they destroy houses, mosques, restaurants, and kill children and women, they said: 'We have launched a successful operation against al-Zarqawi.' The people of Fallujah assure you that this person, if he exists, is not in Fallujah...and we have no links to any groups supporting such inhuman behaviour. We appeal to you to urge the UN [to prevent] the new massacre which the Americans and the puppet government are planning to start soon in Fallujah, as well as many parts of the country."

No Illusions in Capitalist "Democracy"

"Democracy" was of course the pretext for the slaughter in Falluja. George Bush wants a decal of legitimacy slapped on the bloody American occupation of Iraq and so aimed to clean out "foreign insurgents" (look who's calling who "foreigner"!) before the sham elections projected for January 30. *Time* magazine reports that the CIA is funding its favorite candidates, which is how "the Company" has helped install loyal U.S. neocolonial regimes—that is, when the U.S. even bothers to push ballots after bullets.

Al Jazeera cites the deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command, Lieutenant General Lance Smith, as imperiously stating that elections will likely not take place in Falluja at all. "And so it could be that even without, say a city like Falluja voting, that there will be adequate representation by the Sunnis to feel or look like it was legitimate representation for all the parties involved." Smith stated that additional troops will be deployed to "secure the country" before the vote.

Just before the U.S. launched its previous attack on predominantly Sunni Falluja this April in retaliation for the killing of four mercenaries, the occupiers also moved against Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr, shutting down his Baghdad newspaper. These events sparked protests around Iraq and temporary expressions of unity between Shi'ites and Sunnis against the occupation. This time around, Washington is taking better advantage of the longstanding ethnic and religious divisions in the country. Thus, the U.S. deployed Kurdish army forces in Falluja and dangles the carrot of serving as Washington's anointed satraps before the Shi'ite leaders. Iraq is not a nation but a patchwork of different peoples and ethnicities, carved up by the British imperialists out of the old Turkish Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. The Sunni minority lorded it over the Shi'ite majority under Ba'athist rule, and now it looks like the terms of oppression may be reversed.

Meanwhile, many Iraqi Kurds (part of the Kurdish nation which also geographically spans parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria) wrongly look with hope to the American occupation as a rampart against Arab reconquest. As we wrote in "The Left and the 'Iraqi Resistance'" (*WV* No. 830, 6 August): "Absent the working class emerging as an independent political force in a struggle against neocolonial rule, each of these populations can only come to power by oppressing the others and in alliance with U.S. imperialism."

At the same time, thousands of people demonstrated in Baghdad, Basra and Heet in support of the people of Falluja, braving beatings and arrests. The Association of Muslim Scholars rallied 47 political parties, including Sunni, Shi'ite, Christian and even Turkmen, at the Umm al-Qura Mosque to plan a boycott of the elections. As the overextended U.S. military concentrated its forces in Falluja, guerrillas launched large-scale attacks in Ramadi and Mosul.

NBC News

War crime: U.S. Marine kills severely injured, unarmed man inside Falluja mosque, November 13.

The U.S. military had hoped that Iraqi troops would take the front lines during the elections, a key component of the *trompe l'oeil* "sovereignty." But Iraqi troops have deserted en masse when militarily confronted by resistance forces. In Mosul on November 10 and 11, nine police stations were overrun while officers deserted. The stations have been recaptured, but only 800 out of 4,000 officers have reported back to serve under the U.S. occupiers (*Financial Times*, 20-21 November). The U.S. military has resorted to extending tours for troops already deployed in Iraq and calling up reservists who haven't handled a weapon or jogged around the block in years.

The terror, destruction and racist subjugation by foreign imperialist occupation is the immediate threat confronted by the peoples of Iraq. The precondition for any liberation is to get the U.S. and allied troops out. This struggle must be combined with combatting the reactionary clerical forces seeking to impose an Islamic regime. These forces seek to reimpose the veil and (Islamic) *sharia* laws, which reduce women to a status little different than chattel slaves.

Unemployment in Iraq is over 70 percent. The American oil companies and sleazy contractors want to plunder Iraq, and that means grinding neocolonial exploitation of Iraq's working people by the imperialists and their Iraqi front men. Equality for all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, will only come about through the overthrow of capitalist rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This poses the urgency of constructing genuine Marxist parties to lead the fight for workers rule in the region.

The subjugated masses in Iraq face the same racist and union-busting enemy faced by working people and the oppressed in the United States. It is in the class interests of American workers to fight for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq. We do not raise the call for class struggle at home against U.S. imperialism in the light-minded belief that this will be easy to achieve in the repressive post-September 11 climate and in the reactionary context of "national unity" pushed by labor misleaders and Democrats as well as Republicans. We raise this call because it is essential to win the working class to the understanding that it alone has the social power to defeat the American imperialist system and because this Marxist perspective is the *only* way forward. A revolutionary multiracial workers party must be forged to lead the hard struggles ahead to victory. The Spartacist League is dedicated to this purpose.■

Baldwin/NY Times

Homeless and hungry refugees from Falluja line up for scarce food.

Ireland...

(continued from page 2)

the Ploughshares/Catholic Worker 5) in our propaganda. We have stressed that a more effective way of opposing the Irish bourgeoisie and the use of Shannon by the U.S. imperialists would be to mobilise the social power of the proletariat, in particular the airport workers who should take industrial action to prevent the transport of troops and war matériel through Shannon. However, the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders, while often featured speakers on the platforms of the class-collaborationist Irish Anti-War Movement, didn't dare mobilise the power of the workers against the war because it would disturb their cosy "social partnership" with the Irish capitalists. Indeed, the current leaders of the airport workers unions won't even lift a finger in defence of the jobs of their own members who are currently under attack.

We understand that war is an integral part of the capitalist system and seek to use examples like the use of Shannon by the U.S. military and the vindictive prosecution of Mary Kelly to expose the myth of Ireland's "neutrality" and the futility of looking to "our" government to oppose imperialist war. Rather, it is only by becoming conscious that the Irish capitalist class has interests diametrically counterposed to those of the working class that advanced workers can be won to the perspective of building a revolutionary vanguard party to act in the interests of all the oppressed and for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

Mary Kelly's supporters are asking for donations to her legal defence to be sent to: Legal Defence Fund, International Bank Account Number (IBAN) IE 45ULSB 9860 2050 4000 07. Messages of support can be sent to Mary at keltoi@graffiti.net or PO Box 9260, Dublin 1, Ireland.

Comradely greetings,
John Blake
for the Spartacist Group Ireland

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National Office: Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116 (212) 732-7860

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Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
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Vancouver
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Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Chinese Workers Fight Privatization of State-Owned Industry

China Labour Bulletin

Women workers at Tianwang Textile Factory struck for almost seven weeks against Hong Kong bosses after privatization of their plant.

The number of worker demonstrations and strikes in China has increased sharply in recent years. In particular, moves by the Beijing bureaucracy to privatize state-owned factories, which have resulted in hundreds of thousands being laid off in recent years, have been fiercely resisted by the workers. Though nationwide government statistics on the number of protests since 2000 are not available (itself a telling sign), an analysis of Chinese government reports shows an increase in each of the past three years. According to the right-wing think tank, the RAND Corporation:

> "Sichuan, China's largest province, apparently saw an increase in protests of almost 20 percent last year, to nearly 1,500.
>
> "No region has experienced more demonstrations than the aging northeastern rustbelt, known to the West as Manchuria, where market reforms have badly hurt workers and pensioners from inefficient state enterprises. Police in Liaoning Province on the border with North Korea claimed a stunning 9,559 incidents involving more than 863,000 people between January 2000 and September 2002—an average of almost 10 incidents involving 90 people each day for nearly three years."
>
> —*International Herald Tribune*, 3 June

The *Associated Press* (15 November) reported that workers in Shenzhen in southern China seized the Hong Kong owners of an electronics company, demanding unpaid wages. In response, the police warned them not to hurt the hostages, but took no action against the workers. Illustrative of the increasing number of labor actions in China was a recent strike by 6,800 mainly women textile workers at the newly privatized Tianwang Textile Factory in Xianyang (Shaanxi province) in northern China. The battle lasted almost seven weeks, the longest known strike since economic "reforms" were introduced over two decades ago. The workers were fighting impending layoffs and wage cuts being proposed by their new capitalist employers, the Hong Kong-based conglomerate China Resources. The company's offer would give laid-off workers a severance payment of one month's wages for each year they worked there. Those not laid off would be required to sign short-term contracts at lower pay and lose their seniority status. In addition, they would have to serve a six-month "probationary" period during which they would receive 60 percent of their new salary.

Strikers maintained an around-the-clock presence at the factory entrance, in rotating shifts of 200 workers. Banners hanging from the factory gate declared: "We want to survive!" "Protect workers rights!" and "Give us back the funds we worked hard for!" Four days into the strike, on September 18, some 1,000 police appeared at the factory gate with water cannons and prepared to forcibly disperse the pickets. Awakened by their comrades banging on wash basins, thousands of workers and their families poured out of the plant dormitories and surrounded the cops. Confronted by this massive show of solidarity, the police retreated without attempting to use their water cannons.

The whole privatization plan of the Tianwang Textile Factory was carried out in a way designed to implicate the workers in their own demise. A few years ago, the factory was turned into an employee- and management-owned shareholding company. Workers paid 4,000 yuan ($483) for a share in the company (Communist Party officials also invested in the company). But the dream of "cooperative" capitalism did not last long. Now, the workers are reportedly being forced to sell shares back so China Resources can take over.

As with other strikes in this same period, the Tianwang workers' struggle was brought to an end by a "carrot-and-stick" policy. Police rounded up more than 20 strikers and issued "wanted" notices for three others, leading a satisfied China Resources spokesman to proclaim that the strike was "under control." China Resources then got most workers to return to the factory by agreeing to limited concessions: dropping the idea of a probation period and signing longer-term contracts while insisting on the lower wage scale. We demand the release of the arrested strikers—and all those arrested in other, similar strikes—and the dropping of all charges against them!

According to the Hong Kong-based *China Labour Bulletin*, one of the strikers' demands was for the right to elect their own factory-level trade union and to register it with the officially sanctioned trade-union organization, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). To head this off, municipal authorities announced that the ACFTU itself was already moving to establish a union branch at the factory. However, no elections were held to endorse this officially imposed body.

An integral part of our program for proletarian political revolution in the deformed workers states is the struggle for unions free from state control—as opposed to the ACFTU, which is an arm of the ruling bureaucracy in China. Trade unions are necessary even in a healthy workers state to guard against possible encroachments and abuses by the government, as well as to help plan production, work methods, etc. But the trade unions must be based on defense of collectivized property. We warn against those like Han Dongfang and his *China Labour Bulletin*, which baldly admits that its chief editor has been featured on radio broadcasts of the *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Asia*—both of them official anti-communist mouthpieces for U.S. imperialism. When the likes of Han and the *Bulletin* promote "independent" trade unions in China, they are promoting capitalist counterrevolution.

In the face of the fundamental hostility of the capitalist states to the very existence of the workers states, it is indispensable to distinguish between working-class opposition to bureaucratic abuse and imperialist opposition to the workers states themselves. No genuine proletarian opposition to the Stalinist misrulers can be built without a firm commitment to defending the gains of the Chinese Revolution. A Trotskyist party in China would inscribe on its banner: Defend the system of collectivized property, the central gain of the 1949 Revolution. ■

China...

(continued from page 5)

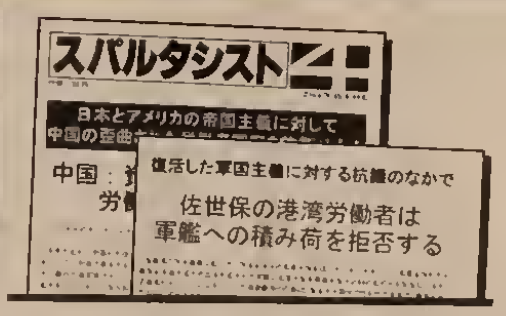
their factory is "restructured" (privatized). Feng says that in some factories there was an open challenge to the transition to capitalist property relations.

One method of obstructing privatization involves occupying the factory. For example, when workers at a plastics factory in Shanghai heard that their factory was being forced to merge with another one (with the implication of layoffs), they blocked all the entrances to the factory and refused the party secretary entry. The workers justified their occupation of the factory as defending public property to which they had legitimate rights. If these protests were organized, they could spark a conflagration of struggle.

Feng says, "This form of action can be traced back to the tradition of working-class struggle in the final years of the Chinese Revolution. As some workers proudly described it, their action of defending the factory was similar to that of their predecessors on the eve of the communist takeover in 1949, when pro-communist workers formed 'worker guard teams' (*gongren jiuchadui*) to protect factories from sabotage by the Guomindang" (interview, January 2000).

In some cases, workers' protests against restructuring eventually brought the disputes to workers and staff councils (WSC). While these WSCs are, according to law, meant to scrutinize management, they are actually for the most part powerless because the trade unions—which the WSCs are based on—are powerless on the shop floor. While workers are pretty cynical about the WSCs, there are cases where they have become a critical arena for contesting restructuring.

Ohara Institute for Social Research



1927 poster by Japanese Communist Party's National League for Non-Intervention in China Movement calls for immediate withdrawal of Japanese troops and for the right of Japanese, Chinese and Korean workers in Manchuria and Mongolia to organize and strike. Above: Supplement to *Spartacist Japan* (15 December 2001) published an article on refusal by Sasebo dock workers to load arms bound for U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

At the SL Company, the WSC held a company referendum and the privatizing scheme was rejected by 80 percent of the workers and staffers. According to the workers there, this was the first time in the factory's history that they had voted to decide something important to their interests.

Workers from Changjiang Sugar Factory in July of 1999 argued in their petition letter to the provincial trade union: "How to restructure the form of property should be democratically determined by workers. The county government cannot unilaterally decide it.... Workers are the master of the enterprise and the main body (*zhuti*) of reform. Restructuring without consulting the workers' and staff council and selling the factory without informing workers are serious violations of workers' democratic rights. We demand to get back our democratic rights."

This is a powerful example that workers are not prepared to raise the white flag concerning collectivized property. They have an answer to the question "democracy for what class?": Democracy for the workers to fight in defense of collectivized property. An important political limitation is that they need to defend the collectivized property of the workers state in general, not just of *their* factory. They need to understand that they are part of the international proletariat. This underscores the necessity of a Leninist party to bring this consciousness into the proletariat.

An important misconception that I'd like to deal with is that maximizing productivity and egalitarianism are counterposed in a workers state. This view contends that only the market can discipline managers and workers in order to maximize production and that egalitarianism is only possible through a command-planned economy. The false political framework of this narrow view is that the *only* political form of a workers state is the political monopoly of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The only thing the neo-Maoists within the bureaucracy can offer is a command-planned economy. Its limitations are that the workers, technical intelligentsia and managers don't identify themselves with the government that issues the plan, which leads to ignoring and subverting the plan at its base. Thus there is an inherent tendency for Stalinist regimes to replace centralized planning and management with market mechanisms in order to discipline the workers and managers. Trotsky, commenting in *The Revolution Betrayed* on the command-planned economy under Stalin, stated that "The Soviet products are as though branded with the gray label of indifference. Under a nationalized economy, quality demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery." Workers democracy is key to bridging the tasks of maximizing productivity and egalitarianism within a workers state. This necessitates a revolutionary proletarian party.

Workers of the World, Unite!

I have clarified that China is a bureaucratically deformed workers state because the core of the economy is collectivized property, and that the Stalinist bureaucracy is a privileged caste with a contradictory nature, not a class; it can't be reformed. Reinstituting the "iron rice bowl" with the bureaucracy still grasping political power will not resolve the main

Flu...

(continued from page 6)

a serious flu epidemic, and in their October 18 press release called on "the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to immediately convene within the next two weeks, a 'crisis summit' of key federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and patient advocacy groups to establish crisis plans for the coming flu season." ACEP presented a practical, 6-point plan with proposals to alleviate emergency room overcrowding and called for "federal and state emergency funding" for hospitals and emergency departments.

U.S. Health and Human Services spokesman Tony Jewel responded contemptuously that ACEP only wants to "make a money grab" (*USA Today*, 19 October) and also accused ACEP of trying to "scare people" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 October)! This from an administration that endlessly hypes the dubious threat of a terrorist "bio-warfare attack" in order to spend billions of dollars in the "Bioshield" program to buy drugs or vaccines for smallpox, anthrax and botulinus toxin, but sits on its hands when a genuine biothreat is impending. Democratic challenger John Kerry's attempt to attack Bush on this reeked of hypocrisy, since the Democrats agree on the idea of "free market" medicine—Kerry specifically rejected any suggestion of "government-run" health care in the last debate before the election.

Mike Luckovich/Atlanta Journal-Constitution

"Market Forces" Close the Hospitals

By law emergency rooms have to treat anyone who walks in. EMTALA (Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act), for example, provides a meager "safety net" for the uninsured, requiring "medical screening examinations" to find and stabilize emergency conditions. But the "free market" is devastating emergency rooms, which are losing money because of the vast numbers of uninsured who rely on them for medical care. The capitalist answer has been to ***shut down*** the "unprofitable" emergency rooms and hospitals! In September the San Jose Medical Center, the only hospital in downtown San Jose and one that's served the community for 80 years, precipitously announced it was closing on December 9. The decision was made by its owner, the giant conglomerate Hospital Corporation of America, because of "higher wage costs and increasing numbers of uninsured patients" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 September).

San Jose mayor Ron Gonzales, whose own life was recently saved by this hospital when he suffered a heart attack a few months ago, expressed some mild "concern" but went on to insist that "we can't force the Hospital Corporation of America, as a private business, to change its business decision." Private business plans are to tear down the hospital to make way for some other "enterprise." As an emergency measure, this hospital should be seized and forced to remain open and funded by seizing profits of HCA in the state. But no capitalist politician would make such a proposal in defiance of bourgeois law. Officials of Santa Clara County, which includes San Jose, reacted to the planned closure by threatening to cut off trauma care for people airlifted from smaller nearby counties, such as Santa Cruz, which lack such facilities. Meanwhile, several other emergency rooms have also announced closure recently, particularly in Los Angeles. "We face an unraveling of our health care system," commented Dr. Jack Lewin, head of the California Medical Association (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 September).

This is a medical emergency, but it isn't even admitted, let alone addressed, by the Democratic and Republican co-rulers of the imperialist order. The collapse of the health care system is a glaring example of the bankruptcy of capitalism in meeting human need, and the screaming necessity for a collective reorganization of society's productive capacity under a workers government.■

problem: the bureaucracy is opposed to the workers mobilized in their own, revolutionary internationalist interests. Its policies, based on building "socialism in one country," undermine the defense of the workers state. The bureaucracy must be removed by the workers.

The examples I gave clearly show that the program of proletarian political revolution, based on unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state and the establishment of genuine workers democracy, is no pipe dream for Chinese workers. Building a revolutionary internationalist, Leninist-Trotskyist party is necessary to make it a reality. This is the most fundamental historic task of the Chinese proletariat. For such a party, a political revolution establishing a workers democracy and instituting a centralized planned economy with a strict monopoly of foreign trade is part of the program of international proletarian revolution. Workers in the SOEs must tie their struggle to the struggle of workers in private enterprises—to expropriate those enterprises—to migrant workers, to the poor peasants, to women, and to oppressed minorities. The party must be a tribune of all the people. Nationalism is false consciousness.

It is critical to understand that the Japanese proletariat can be an ally of the Chinese proletariat. There is a history of the Japanese proletariat's opposition to Japanese imperialism's aggression against China. In 1927 the Japanese Communist Party called for unconditional withdrawal of Japanese troops from Manchuria and for the right to strike and organize of Chinese, Korean and Japanese workers. In 2001, the Sasebo dock workers refused to load a ship with arms bound for U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Workers of the world can unite. The ICL fights to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution.

The Chinese "New Left" is rife with contradictions. Most defend the inviolability of private property in principle, but they don't like the "down side" of the market. In particular, they understand that if the land is privatized the poor peasants will be ruined. The Chinese "New Left" seeks the impossible: capitalism with a human face. Only the proletariat supported by the poor peasants can defend the nationalized land. Besides, China won't be modernized through capitalism. Capitalist China will look like a mix of the warlordism following the first Chinese Revolution in 1911 and post-counterrevolution Russia today.

The question of "democracy" cannot be separated from the class nature of the state. For example, the fake-Trotskyist affiliate of the United Secretariat in Hong Kong, Pioneer, blazoned in the headline of its New Year's Day 2004 statement in support of the protest that day: "For General Elections Through Universal Franchise and Free Nominations!" This call is virtually identical to the demand issued by U.S. imperialism's representative in Hong Kong the month before. The first order of business in Hong Kong is the expropriation of the bourgeoisie there. These calls for "democracy" with no intention of defending collectivized property on the mainland are a cover for not-so-"democratic" counterrevolution.

For all those who call China capitalist, here's a short anecdote from a novel by Ha Jin, *The Crazed*. During the Tiananmen protests a reactionary shouted to the workers: "Don't be slaves anymore!" A locksmith responded: "How dare you call me a slave." Chinese workers are not prepared to surrender; they are not slaves. They want to fight to defend collectivized property. They can be the masters of their state, but they need leadership.

To finish, I wanted to make a few points about the ICL's intervention into the incipient proletarian political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90. The tasks of the international proletariat are immense. Our intervention showed that it is possible when there's a small crack, during a revolutionary situation, like the two weeks it took to enforce martial law at Tiananmen, for a revolutionary program to have tremendous impact. Workers came to us and asked, how do we form workers soviets? Enough East German workers considered what the ICL was fighting for, that when the fascists desecrated the Treptow Soviet war memorial the ruling Stalinist government felt compelled to join a united-front protest we initiated against the fascists and in defense of the deformed workers state. A quarter of a million workers participated. For the first time ever in a deformed workers state, Trotskyists shared a platform with the Stalinists. We were fighting to become the revolutionary leadership. From the platform, our speaker called for "Workers and soldiers soviets to power!"

This was the best defense against capitalist counterrevolution. Two programs were competing: ours, of proletarian political revolution, and the Stalinist program of capitulation and counterrevolution. The Treptow mobilization frightened the powers that be, both East and West, and our forces were too small. We lost. The lessons of that struggle and of Tiananmen must be assimilated by the international proletariat. The key question is not how to modernize China, but how to establish an international soviet system that can resolve the problem of scarcity in the world.■

Viktor Bulla

Russian workers at Putilov factory vote for delegates to Petrograd Soviet in 1920. Under Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, soviets were organs of working-class rule. Stalin's political counterrevolution destroyed Bolshevik Party and liquidated soviet democracy.

Spartakist

January 1990, East Berlin: ICL initiated 250,000-strong anti-fascist rally at Berlin's Treptow Park, where Spartakist speaker denounced Stalinists, called for workers to power.

Revolution vs. Counterrevolution in Germany, 1989-90

Chinese Miners Revolt Against "Market Reforms"

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad!

Down With Zionist Witchhunt on Campus!

Columbia University

Young Spartacus

We reprint below a corrected version of a New York Spartacus Youth Club leaflet issued on November 22. The original version incorrectly asserted that we would not sign the petition in defense of Professor Massad.

Columbia University is today ground zero in a right-wing witchhunt designed to intimidate and drive out any professor who does not toe the line of support to the state of Israel. The latest escalation was triggered by a squalid little film by the David Project, *Columbia Unbecoming*. It slanderously accuses Professor Joseph Massad, along with other professors in the Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) department, of "academic intimidation" of pro-Israel Zionist students. The New York City gutter press *Daily News* and the *New York Sun* have embarked on a vicious campaign against Massad and several other professors. The *Sun*, along with New York City Democratic Congressman Anthony Weiner, has explicitly called for Massad's firing.

With the screaming front-page headline "Poison Ivy: Climate of Hate Rocks Columbia University," the *Daily News* (21 November) featured a sinister "special report." In it, respected professors such as Massad, Hamid Dabashi, Rashid Khalidi, George Saliba and Nicholas De Genova are denounced as "Columbia's firebrands," the "faculty with the most strongly anti-Israel views." The article is replete with alleged quotes from the professors described as "venom disguised as classroom instruction."

In response to the film, the Columbia administration has launched a formal investigation into the film's accusations and promised to "take whatever steps are necessary." Not content with this, the Democrat-dominated New York City Council has announced they will demand an outside investigation if the university investigation "comes up dry" (*New York Sun*, 12 November). ***Down with the Zionist witchhunt! Hands off Joseph Massad and the other professors!***

The attacks on Massad and other professors are nothing less than a campaign to silence and drive out those who speak against the crimes of U.S. imperialism and its allies. Well before *Columbia Unbecoming*, Professor Massad, a contributing writer for the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram Weekly*, had long been reviled by Zionists. In 2002 a Zionist think tank, the Middle East Forum, set up the Campus Watch Web site in an attempt to blacklist pro-Palestinian academics, whom it labels "apologists to terrorism." Professors such as Massad, Dahashi and Khalidi were listed on this site.

A regular recipient of death threats, Massad declared in his statement responding to the charges in the film: "With this campaign against me going into its fourth year, I chose under the duress of coercion and intimidation not to teach my course this year. ***It is my academic freedom that has been circumscribed. But not only mine.***" An e-mail to Massad by a professor of medicine, Moshe Ruhin, expressed the real sentiments of the forces behind this campaign: "Go back to Arab land where Jew hating is condoned. Get the hell out of America. You are a disgrace and a pathetic typical Arab liar" (*Columbia Spectator*, 27 October).

In the context of U.S. imperialism's bloody colonial occupation of Iraq and the post-September 11 bipartisan "war on terror," the forces of the far right are pushing to roll things back to the McCarthyite 1950s when Communists, leftists and even liberals were driven off the campuses while black students were excluded altogether. It was precisely the exclusion of black students that the racist anti-affirmative action "bake sale" sponsored by the Columbia College Conservative Club last semester was all about (see "Campus Right-Wingers Target Black Students," *WV* No. 821, 5 March).

Indeed, the principal instigators of these assaults on campus dissent, such as Campus Watch's Daniel Pipes, are closely linked to the Bush administration. Pipes is part of the neoconservative Project for the New American Century.

continued on page 8

Israel: Vanunu Arrested Again

Reuters

Heroic nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu speaks to reporters while in court on November 11 following his arrest.

Down With the Gag Order!

On November 11 at dawn, over 30 police armed with machine guns descended on St. George's Cathedral in East Jerusalem to re-arrest Mordechai Vanunu, the brave whistleblower of Israel's hidden massive nuclear arsenal. He was grabbed along with his laptop and papers and taken to Petah Tikva, the Shin Bet (internal security) interrogation center near Tel Aviv, where he was questioned for ten hours and released on bail to house arrest. On November 17 he was pulled in again for further questioning. The crazed and vindictive Zionist state will not rest until Vanunu is permanently silenced for having revealed almost 20 years ago that Israel's capitalist rulers had enough nuclear weapons not only to incinerate every Arab capital, but to bomb major cities in the Soviet Union as well—and the missile capacity to do so.

Vanunu was released from the notorious Ashkelon prison hellhole on April 21 after spending 18 years there, eleven and a half in solitary confinement. In 1986, Vanunu, a former technician at the Dimona nuclear weapons facility, was kidnapped by the Mossad (Israel's secret intelligence agency) in Italy, drugged and tried in total secrecy after revealing to the London *Sunday Times* that Israel had amassed upward of 200 nuclear warheads and was building hydrogen and neutron bombs. Despite Vanunu's having served his full prison term, the Israeli government has used a State of Emergency statute passed in 1945 when Palestine was under British Mandate to commit Vanunu to virtual imprisonment within its borders.While he is no longer nnder house arrest, he continues to be barred from leaving the country, talking to non-Israelis, going near airports, ports, embassies, and is under 24-hour police surveillance.

As soon as he passed through the prison gates, Vanunu gave a press conference and has continued to speak out defiantly to the international press to denounce the Zionist doomsday machine. In an August 18 interview with Amy Goodman on her show, *Democracy Now!*, Vanunu said, "I'm very happy and glad that I...let all the world and the Israeli people see the true face of Israel who used to remind the world 'holocaust, holocaust' every hour, every day, but in fact Israel [has] a holocaust factory. This Jewish state was producing holocaust weapons."

Another cell in the same Ashkelon dungeon was inhabited by Marcus Klingberg who had intimate knowledge of Israel's other secret arsenal of megadeath, its stockpile of chemical and bacteriological weapons (see "Free Israeli Scientist Marcus Klingberg!" *WV* No. 596, 18 March 1994). Klingberg worked at Nes Tsiona, the top-secret research center where "non-conventional weaponry, from viruses to poison derived from mushrooms," was developed (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 6 January 1994). Klingberg was disappeared and secretly tried in 1983 and sentenced to 20 years, convicted of spying for the Soviet degenerated workers state—no crime in the eyes of the world working class. He was finally released to house arrest in 1998, and in 2003 was allowed to leave Israel at the age of 84.

At nearly the same time the police were dragging Vanunu in to threaten him yet again, the Israeli military killed three Egyptian border cops with a tank shell fired into the Egyptian side of the border at Rafah in Gaza, saying that the Egyptians were mistaken for Palestinian "terrorists." Sharon's Gaza "withdrawal" plan has meant the escalation of Israeli terror against the besieged Palestinian masses. The daily death toll of Palestinians continues, and the population in both Gaza and the West Bank was put under lockdown following the death of Yasir Arafat. Some 7,400 Palestinian prisoners languish in Israeli jails. We demand the immediate

continued on page 8

WORKERS VANGUARD

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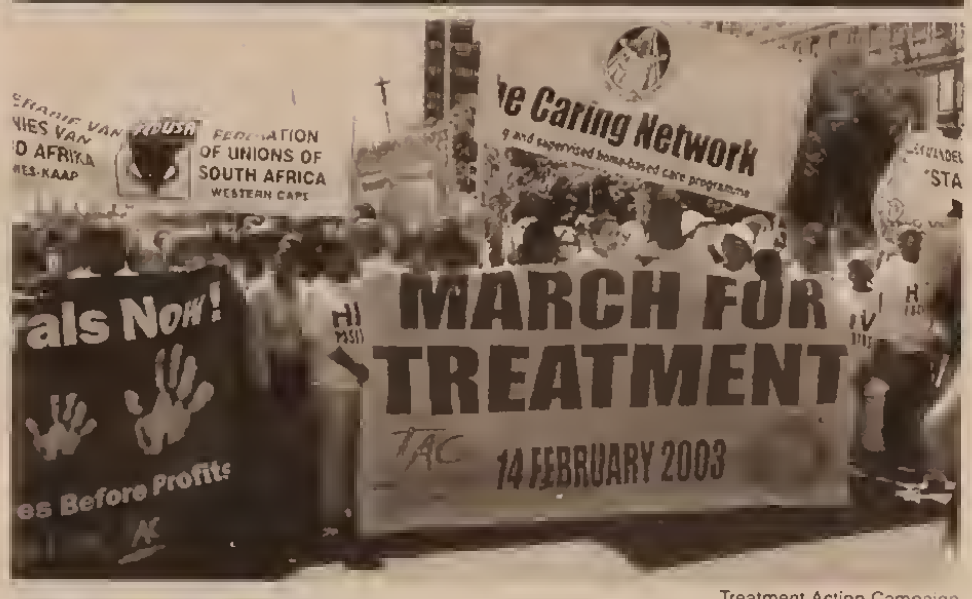
No. 838 GCIU C-701 10 December 2004

ANC's Neo-Apartheid Capitalism

AIDS Ravages South Africa

Geert van Kesteren

Free HIV Drugs for All!



Treatment Action Campaign

An estimated 5.3 million people in South Africa are infected with HIV. Above: Treatment Action Campaign march on Parliament in Cape Town demands life-saving drugs from ANC government to fight AIDS, February 2003.

We reprint below an article from Spartacist South Africa *No. 4 (Spring/Summer 2004), newspaper of the South African section of the International Communist League.*

The bourgeois nationalist African National Congress (ANC)-led Tripartite Alliance is celebrating "10 years of democracy" and heralding a rollout of anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs to people with AIDS. Behind the hype is the same criminal obstruction of treatment and rejection of science that has plagued official HIV/AIDS policy from the outset. The brutal reality of South Africa is the convergence of HIV-denial with the capitalist profit system. Still, whatever ARV drugs are distributed is welcome because some lives will be saved, prolonged and improved in quality—no small thing to those living with HIV/AIDS.

The development of ARV treatments has transformed lives across the globe. Yet [President Thabo] Mbeki and the ANC tops have led a cruel and ideologically reactionary campaign against these treatments that has crippled the implementation of ARV therapy such as would be possible even within a capitalist framework. This has meant an *acceleration* of the epidemic in South Africa. The deaths of at least a thousand people a day can be laid at the feet of the ANC mass murderers.

Fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic requires a mobilisation of society and all of its scientific and medical resources. But extreme social inequality and unequal access to medical care are the reality under capitalism. Uganda, India or Brazil are all countries of massive destitution where diseases that are routinely treated in advanced industrial countries are still fatal. Even the most "rational" AIDS policy in such circumstances still entails a death sentence for untold numbers of people. In South Africa, the Milpark Hospital casualty unit in a wealthy Johannesburg suburb and the same facility in Baragwanath hospital near Soweto are in two entirely different worlds. We say: ***Open the private hospitals! For free, quality health care for all!***

The powerful South African working class must take up the fight against this neo-apartheid government for ARVs. COSATU, NACTU, FEDUSA and other union federations should agitate on behalf of their members and all of the afflicted for lifesaving therapies to be made available to all, to tear up the intellectual property rights documents, and demand the immediate procurement and production of the necessary ARVs! The working class should take up the fight for the ***expropriation without compensation*** of the pharmaceutical companies as a vital public health measure. But the COSATU union bureaucrats and the South African Communist Party (SACP) are the foremost obstacles to working-class struggle in this country, and play a key role in the government, administering capitalist austerity. This drives home the urgent need for a class-struggle leadership in the unions to break the working class from the Tripartite Alliance.

As communists with an internationalist proletarian vision, we know that only the expropriation of the bourgeoisie can eliminate the vast social inequalities of capitalism. This fight for revolutionary socialism must be consciously undertaken through the struggle for the complete political independence of the working class from all capitalist parties. The critical and urgent task is the construction of a Leninist-Trotskyist party.

ANC Criminal Obstruction Continues

On 19 November 2003, the Cabinet approved a plan calling for "at least one service point in every health district" in a year and "one service point in every local municipality" in five years. They promised anti-retroviral treatment for those with a CD4 count below 200 and/or who have AIDS symptomatic illnesses, requiring the upgrading of the health care system and the recruitment and training of "thousands of health professionals." Substantial monies have been allocated, although only a portion will go directly to the purchase and distribution of drugs.

The government's plan is a measure to dampen unrest at home and market the "new South Africa" abroad, not a fundamental change of heart. After his February state of the nation address, Mbeki *denied* the HIV/AIDS death toll, saying there are not proper mortality figures to know "what are the things that kill South Africans." In March, Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel said that it was a waste to spend money on ARVs, which he termed "a lot of voodoo." Meanwhile, the Health Minister has intensified her campaign pushing the African potato, suggesting that traditional medicine may replace ARVs. Any implementation by the Mbeki government will be grudging and access to ARV drugs will be "akin to a lottery and will depend on where you live" (*Mail & Guardian*, 27 February-4 March).

In fact, except for the highlighting of the "role of traditional healers," most features of this plan will be honoured in the breach. (With this pandemic, any concession to the "legitimate" role of traditional medicine runs counter to scientific necessity.) The government specifically projected over 53,000 people would be on ARVs by the end of March 2004. As of June, only *3,667* were receiving ARVs through the national plan and four provinces had not even started distribution. This is a tragically small number when considered against the estimated *5.3 million people* in South Africa who are infected with HIV. The central government only began the procurement of ARVs in February, exacerbating an acute crisis in distribution. One Health Department official justified these delays by explaining that they resulted from a trade deal with India and Brazil that would allow South Africa to become a major AIDS drugs *exporter* according to the "broader principles of black economic empowerment" (*This Day*, 3 March). The ANC is more than willing to crucify infected South Africans of all colours on the cross of domestic pharmaceutical profits.

The government's promise to upgrade medical delivery is hollow. The public health care system is collapsing. The Health Department has been plagued by critical vacancies for most of last year. The ANC has failed to implement even the modestly scaled post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) programme providing ARV to rape survivors. Commenting last year on a mother-to-child prevention programme started in 2001, a *Mail & Guardian* article proclaimed: "Shambles at AIDS baby treatment sites" (27 June-3 July 2003). At a 25 January AIDS forum organised by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), a health care worker vividly described overcrowding, shortage of nurses, and the absence of refrigeration or medicine for TB, diabetes or blood pressure. If your baby is sick, you may get some panado syrup [pain reliever] and are told to figure out the rest yourself. In rural areas, magnify this 100 times. Even according to the Health Department, "public health care has been chronically under-funded for the past five years" (*Mail & Guardian*, 20-26 February).

A report previously suppressed by the government reveals that 46 per cent of all hospital patients in the country are HIV positive. ***16 per cent of health workers are likely to die from AIDS between 2002 and 2007 if they don't get ARV.*** A compelling course of action would mandate that ARVs be immediately procured to save lives now to sustain the key health sector. But profit, not social necessity, drives the calculations of the ANC government.

Ruling as black front men for the

continued on page 10

Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Protest Massacre of Unionists in Philippines!

On November 24 the Partisan Defense Committee sent the following letter to Ricardo S. Ramos, President, Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union, and Rene Galang, President, United Luisita Workers Union, in the Philippines.

The Partisan Defense Committee—the legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—denounces in the strongest terms the savage violence of the Philippine National Police and Philippine Army on Tuesday, November 16, 2004 against striking workers of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (CATLU) and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) at the sprawling Hacienda Luisita of the sugar barons of the Cojuangco family, including former president Corazon Cojuangco Aquino.

The multiple acts of coldblooded murder by the Philippine National Police and units of the Philippine Armed Forces who fired on thousands of striking CATLU and ULWU workers and their supporters with tear gas and high-powered rifles, repeatedly charged the strikers' barricade with armed personnel carriers and waded into the strikers swinging their truncheons with wanton brutality, leaving seven dead, including one child, and hundreds injured and wounded, were acts of savage brutality which should be condemned by working people the world over. Now the over 100 arrested strikers imprisoned as a result of these attacks face dangerous government/police frame-up charges that they instigated the violence! Among others, Lieutenant General Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command has retailed the dangerous lie that "The police recovered firearms in the vicinity where unidentified armed men, believed to be communist, had fired at random." This crude frame-up is carried out to set up the arrested for long prison terms and the union pickets and supporters for further armed attacks. Free the CATLU/ULWU striker prisoners! Drop all the charges! Hands off the Luisita strikers! Reinstate the 327 fired workers!

We greatly admire the courage of your members who continue the strike and the pickets at the Hacienda Luisita despite facing the state's brutal armed force and the constant threat of government murder and imprisonment. We say: Victory to the CATLU and ULWU strikers!

We know that the real source of the violence in the Philippines is the blood-drenched capitalist regime dedicated to further grinding down the living conditions of the workers and peasants of this impoverished country in the interest of the sugar oligarchs, the International Monetary Fund and the country's semi-colonial masters in Washington. Presently presided over by aristocrat President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the fragile system of parliamentary democracy is a paper-thin cover for brutal exploitation and savage state repression against the Philippine working class and peasantry, and their unions and political organizations, perpetrated in an unbroken line from "people power" president Corazon Aquino to Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and now Arroyo, differing in form only from the dictatorial regime of the hated Ferdinand Marcos. In addition, Arroyo has for years welcomed the increase in the number of U.S. troops in the Philippines under cover of the supposed "war against terror" being carried out by the murderous madmen in Washington. Down with the Arroyo/Washington terror against the workers, peasants and minorities of the Philippines! Down with the Visiting Forces Agreement! U.S. military out of the Philippines!

Victory to the Hacienda Luisita strike!

Enclosed please find our letter of protest to President Arroyo. In addition, we are mailing a $100 donation to you for the Hacienda Luisita strike. ■

AFP

Martyred workers borne in funeral procession by striking sugar workers and relatives in Luzon, Philippines.

TROTSKY

Socialism and Human Liberation

In a November 1932 speech given during the Great Depression to a Danish Social Democratic student group in Copenhagen, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky explained how socialism, by unleashing the productive forces of mankind and giving people the ability to rationally plan and control their economies, would open the door to human liberation in all spheres of life—for the first time making human beings the masters of their own destiny.

LENIN

Capitalism has outlived itself as a world system. It has ceased to fulfill its essential mission, the increase of human power and human wealth. Humanity cannot stand still at the level which it has reached. Only a powerful increase in productive forces and a sound, planned, that is, socialist organization of production and distribution can assure humanity—all humanity—of a decent standard of life and at the same time give it the precious feeling of freedom with respect to its own economy. Freedom in two senses—first of all, man will no longer be compelled to devote the greater part of his life to physical labor. Second, he will no longer be dependent on the laws of the market, that is, on the blind and dark forces which have grown up behind his back. He will build up his economy freely, that is, according to a plan, with compass in hand. This time it is a question of subjecting the anatomy of society to the X ray through and through, of disclosing all its secrets and subjecting all its functions to the reason and the will of collective humanity. In this sense, socialism must become a new step in the historical advance of mankind. To our ancestor, who first armed himself with a stone axe, the whole of *nature* represented a conspiracy of secret and hostile forces. Since then, the natural sciences, hand in hand with practical technology, have illuminated nature down to its most secret depths....

Technology liberated man from the tyranny of the old elements—earth, water, fire, and air—only to subject him to its own tyranny. Man ceased to be a slave to nature, to become a slave to the machine, and, still worse, a slave to supply and demand. The present world crisis testifies in especially tragic fashion how man, who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere, who converses on invisible waves with the antipodes, how this proud and daring ruler of nature remains a slave to the blind forces of his own economy. The historical task of our epoch consists in replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs of mankind. Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and—every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a full citizen in the realm of thought.

—Leon Trotsky, "In Defense of the Russian Revolution," 27 November 1932, reprinted in *Leon Trotsky Speaks* (Pathfinder Press, 1972)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Alan Wilde

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Michael Davisson

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No. 838 **10 December 2004**

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China, Centralized Planning and "Market Socialism"

30 October 2004

Dear comrades,

In the "Exchange on the Million Worker March" in *WV* 834 (15 October), we assert that "Despite deep capitalist inroads fostered by the Chinese bureaucracy's 'market reforms,' the collectivized property and planned economy created by the revolution persist." While the core of the Chinese economy is still collectivized property in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and China is still a deformed workers state, it is wrong to say that the planned economy persists. Under the Chinese Communist Party's "market socialist" reforms, centralized economic planning was replaced by a system in which autonomous state-owned enterprises compete with one another in the marketplace.

Generally, deformed workers states have either a command planned economy or a "market socialist economy." As explained in the Spartacist League's 1988 *"Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe* pamphlet, there is an inherent tendency for Stalinist regimes to abandon central planning in favor of "market socialist" elements. Trotsky wrote in *The Revolution Betrayed*: "It is possible to build gigantic factories according to a ready-made Western pattern by bureaucratic command—although, to be sure, at triple the normal cost. But the further you go, the more the economy runs into the problem of quality, which slips out of the hands of a bureaucracy like a shadow."

The bureaucrats' solution to the problem of quality is to turn to "market" mechanisms to discipline factory managers and workers alike. In opposition to both bureaucratic command and "market socialism," we fight for proletarian political revolution. To quote Trotsky again: "Under a nationalized economy, *quality* demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative—conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery."

The economic regime that exists in China today, and for the last two decades, is a variant of "market socialism." The two-part article on China, "Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!" (*WV* Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December 2003, now translated as the ICL's sixth Chinese-language pamphlet), explains the important structural change that has taken place in the way SOEs are financed. "Under the old centralized planning system, enterprises whose costs for whatever reason exceeded their normal revenues received non-repayable grants from the industrial ministry overseeing them.... When 'market socialism' was introduced in the early 1980's, enterprises were supposed to become profit-maximizing and financially self-sufficient." That did not happen, however, and the SOEs which could not repay their loans were not all closed down, which would have resulted in an economic collapse. "Instead, in a totally unplanned, inadequate and haphazard way, 'non-performing' bank loans were substituted for direct government financing."

Chinese president Hu Jintao and George W. Bush at APEC conference in Chile, November.

Under "market socialism," the bureaucracy maintains control over the economy, not through an overall "plan," but through political control. The two-part article on China cites the example of a profitable cement company, listed on the Shanghai stock exchange, which was forced by the local CCP to take over and operate a non-performing steel mill because the workers at the steel mill were waging protests over unpaid wages.

A telling example of the lack of planning in China today is the binge of "rogue" mini steel mills that are popping up around the country, what amounts to an investment bubble in steel mills. Local bureaucrats apparently look with favor on these new steel mills as a way to assure a local steel supply, and also because steel has been a very profitable sector of the economy. It is driving the central bureaucracy crazy because the mills are soaking up resources and energy, driving up prices for raw materials, clogging the rail system, and are often inefficient in terms of size, location and environmental factors. Beijing has cracked down on the proliferation of mills, but the main mechanism for doing so is not to change a plan, but to regulate market forces. For example, new banking regulations have been imposed to tighten bank loans for steel projects, especially for smaller mills. SOEs that want to build a mill now must invest 40 percent of the capital from their own funds.

The fact that China is not a planned economy does not vitiate its character as a deformed workers state. There are many examples of Stalinist regimes which have presided over "market socialist" economics. Moreover, the Soviet Union did not have a centralized planned economy during the NEP period. As the *"Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe* pamphlet states: "The drift toward 'market socialism' is neither linear nor irreversible.... These measures do not amount to creeping capitalism, as many Western bourgeois commentators and not a few confused leftists contend. But they do strengthen the internal forces for capitalist counterrevolution." Notably the first counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc was consummated in the DDR (East Germany), which at the time had centralized planning and management. The "market reforms" in China have indeed created a growing class of mainland capitalists and made inroads for the Hong Kong, Taiwan and imperialist bourgeoisies, all of which creates fodder for the cause of counterrevolution. This makes all the more urgent our fight for proletarian political revolution.

Comradely,
Jon P.

WV **replies:**

Comrade Jon P. is correct. As we wrote in Part One of "Workers Protests Shake China" (*WV* No. 781, 17 May 2002): "The changing economic course from bureaucratic centralization under Mao to 'market socialism' under Deng & Co. reflects a general tendency under Stalinist rule to 'rationalize' the economy through decentralization." The two-part China article quoted above, as well as the two-part article "Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!" (*WV* Nos. 814 and 815) referenced by Jon P., are available on the ICL's Web site (www.icl-fi.org). These articles, as well as the 1988 Spartacist pamphlet, *"Market Socialism" in Eastern Europe*, can be ordered for $1.00 each from Spartacist Publishing Company, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10116.■

"On Seniors and the Disabled" Hits Home

Received 23 November 2004

To the Editor,

The article "On seniors and the disabled" published in the September 3, 2004 Workers Vanguard hit home. As a person with a disability I can see the need to break with the capitalist parties and form a Workers Party. Here in Massachusetts as in the rest of the nation a war has been declared against the poor. Politicians like MA Governor Mitt Romney have cut and underfunded services to the poor, the disabled and the elderly.

In MA there is nothing left to school lunches for poor children. Housing for the homeless is slow with the section 8 voucher program frozen for the last four years. The numbers of the homeless and people reduced to begging to survive is epidemic.

As a person with a disability the small disability check I receive is handled by a Representative Payee. I must produce receipts for any extra spending of my own money. This is because the rich bosses and their servants the politicians want the people to think that the poor are parasites when the exact opposite is actually true, it is the rich bosses who are parasitical living off of the labor of others.

During the last election the service agencies and charities were telling us to vote for the Democrats. Yet it was and is the Democratic led legislature who approves Romney's budgets and policies!

Recently I read Karl Marx's "The Civil War in France"—much of it could and does apply to the election. What stands out to me is when he said that voting in a capitalist election is voting for "despotism at home and war abroad."

There is only one logical conclusion which is proven that under capitalism nothing will be better without a fight, and what is won will be taken away. Only a Socialist Revolution will give people what they have a right to whether worker, retired, elderly or disabled.

Thank you,
Alan N.

P.S. To clarify the receipts I turn in are sent to the Social Security Administration for approval.

CORRECTIONS

In "Bill Cosby Rants Against Ghetto Poor: The Crisis of Black Leadership" by Don Cane (*WV* No. 832, 17 September), it was incorrectly stated that Julian Bond was president of the NAACP in 1998. He was the chairman of the board; Kweisi Mfume (who just announced his plans to resign) was the president and CEO. A May 26 interview with Bill Cosby by Tavis Smiley was a PBS television, not National Public Radio, broadcast. The article also misidentified Khalil Tian Shahyd, author of a *San Francisco Bay View* article, as female.

In "Racist Fundamentalists Take White House, Again" (*WV* No. 836, 12 November), we incorrectly wrote that Arizona's Proposition 200 "denies government benefits to non-citizens." Prop. 200 denies some types of non-federally mandated benefits to non-citizens who cannot prove legal status, while also mandating punitive measures against state and local government workers who do not withhold benefits or report undocumented applicants.

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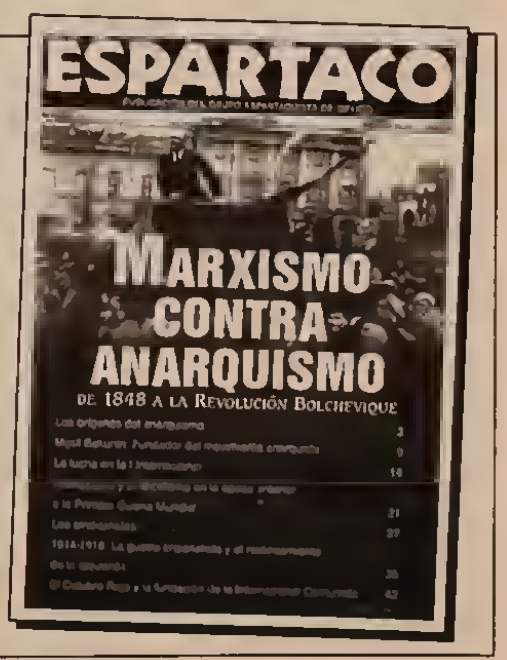


—— "Democracy" Movement Made in U.S.A. ——

Ukraine: Robber Barons and Nationalist Demagogues Fall Out

DECEMBER 5—To go by the images in newspapers and on TV screens in the U.S., what has been going on in Ukraine in the past two weeks is a "carnival of democracy" driven forward by young kids dyeing their hair orange and dancing to live rock music on the streets of Kiev. "The story line could not have been simpler," wrote the *New York Times* (4 December). "There were villains, a hero and a chorus. The chorus was the people themselves." The hero of this "Orange Revolution" is the pro-Western politician Viktor Yushchenko. The villains—per the American government and media—are a corrupt, tyrannical cabal of Communist holdovers led by current president Leonid Kuchma and heir apparent Viktor Yanukovich who, working in cahoots with Russia's Vladimir Putin, allegedly robbed Yushchenko of his victory in the second round of the presidential elections.

This fairy tale account is sponsored by the same American ruling class that is slaughtering thousands in Najaf, Mosul, Falluja and Baghdad in order, it claims, to bring "democracy" to the Iraqi peoples at bayonet point. In fact, the "spontaneous" outpouring on the streets of Kiev—though tapping into widespread revulsion with official corruption—is orchestrated and funded by the U.S. government and various other agencies of American imperialism, among others. And this "democratic" opposition includes anti-Semitic demagogues railing against a "Russian-Jewish mafia," the open Nazis of the UNSO and admirers of Hitler's genocidal Ukrainian auxiliaries in World War II.

At every level, the spectacle being played out in Ukraine is the product of the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet workers state and ravaged the economies and peoples of the former Soviet republics. Intoxicated by "death of communism" triumphalism, the U.S. ruling class has been riding roughshod over the peoples of the world and is now engaged in a flagrantly provocative intervention in a country that is, after all, considered by a still nuclear-armed capitalist Russia to be its backyard. With the concentration of industry in the east and the military importance of the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula, Ukraine remains of strategic importance to Russia.

A phalanx of American "observers," including Republican Senator Richard Lugar, descended on Kiev to arrogantly rule the second round election results out of order, while White House spokesmen issued imperious threats against Putin's Ukrainian allies. The scenario played out in Ukraine has now become a tried and tested means for U.S. imperialism to impose regime change in the former deformed workers states. London *Guardian* correspondent Ian Traynor reported (26 November):

> "Funded and organised by the US government, deploying US consultancies, pollsters, diplomats, the two big American parties and US non-government organisations, the campaign was first used in Europe in Belgrade in 2000 to beat Slobodan Milosevic at the ballot box.
>
> "Richard Miles, the US ambassador in Belgrade, played a key role. And by last year, as US ambassador in Tbilisi, he repeated the trick in Georgia, coaching Mikhail Saakashvili in how to bring down Eduard Shevardnadze.
>
> "Ten months after the success in Belgrade, the US ambassador in Minsk, Michael Kozak, a veteran of similar operations in central America, notably in Nicaragua, organised a near identical campaign to try to defeat the Belarus hardman, Alexander Lukashenko."

These campaigns are part of a concerted effort to install U.S./NATO military forces or American-loyal regimes on the periphery of the former Soviet Union. It includes stationing troops in Kosovo following the 1999 war against Serbia and in Central Asia and Georgia in conjunction with the "war on terror."

Within Ukraine itself, what is going on is a falling-out between two equally corrupt gangs of robber barons who were earlier scratching each other's backs as they gorged themselves on the privatized theft of the industrial wealth built up over decades by the multinational Soviet working class. Among these robber barons is Kuchma's son-in-law, who was recently given the country's largest steel producer, formerly state owned, for $800 million—roughly half the bid offered by U.S. Steel! Yushchenko is a former director of the central bank who served as Kuchma's prime minister for over a year. Yushchenko's chief lieutenant and "people power" agitator is a rapacious tycoon named Yulia Timoshenko, dubbed the "Eleven Billion Dollar Woman" in Matthew Brzezinski's 2001 book, *Casino Moscow*. Timoshenko gained control of nearly *20 percent* of Ukraine's gross domestic product through her intimate ties to another of Kuchma's prime ministers, one Pavlo Lazarenko, who is now serving time in the U.S. on money-laundering and extortion charges.

Map adapted from KRT Graphics/Newsday

Both sides in this squalid power play in Ukraine have demagogically stoked historic fears and antagonisms between the heavily Russified and Orthodox eastern Ukraine and the more Uniate Catholic and rural western Ukraine. Largely undercut under Soviet rule, these antagonisms returned with capitalist restoration and have been brought to a head in recent weeks, with district administrations in the east threatening to stage plebiscites for regional autonomy. Capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe was driven by—and subsequently served to deepen—bourgeois nationalism. Even if Yushchenko wins the rerun of the second round mandated by the Supreme Court without further turmoil, this will settle nothing.

Ukraine: Between Russia and a Hard Place

Before the October Revolution of 1917, the Ukraine (like Poland) was partitioned between the Russian tsarist empire and the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg empire. The western Ukraine, Austrian eastern Galicia, was populated by ethnic Ukrainian peasants toiling under a Polish landed aristocracy, with Jewish merchants and moneylenders acting as middlemen between the gentry and the peasantry. The eastern Ukraine was subjected under tsarism to forced Russification, with the urban areas populated mainly by ethnic Russians and Jews. Thus Ukrainian nationalism tended to take on a strongly anti-Semitic and anti-Polish, as well as anti-Russian, coloration. At the same time, the proletarian revolution and its Bolshevik vanguard in the Ukraine were necessarily based on the heavily Russian and Jewish eastern urban population.

As a result, the Civil War in the Ukraine following the October Revolution took on a particularly bloody character. Deeply hostile to the rule of the multinational proletariat, successive short-lived Ukrainian bourgeois-nationalist regimes were directly sponsored by German imperialism and/or allied with the Great Russian White Guards and their imperialist patrons—notably Germany and France—as well as with Pilsudski's capitalist Poland, itself a client of French imperialism. Whatever their mutual hostilities, all the imperialist and local bourgeoisies made common cause against Soviet Russia. Finally, the Ukrainian nationalist Petliura, notorious for his massacres of the Jewish population in western Ukraine, made a bloc with the Polish nationalist Pilsudski, ceding the western territories to Poland, a land grab consolidated through the 1920 Soviet-Polish war a year later. When Hitler's Nazis moved into western Ukraine in 1941, they were welcomed by the Ukrainian nationalists, who had already prepared lists of Jews, Poles and Communists to be murdered.

Despite bureaucratic degeneration under the Russian-centered regime of Stalin and his heirs, under Soviet power and the centrally planned, collectivized economy, the Ukraine underwent massive industrialization. The capitalist counterrevolution of 1991-92, leading to the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the creation of distinct capitalist nation-states in the former Soviet republics, dealt a severe body blow to the Ukrainian economy, which had been integrated into an all-Union economic division of labor and had been reliant on Russia for its supplies of oil and natural gas. Output in the period up to 1999 fell to less than 40 percent of the 1991 level.

Thanks in good part to the austerity policies pursued by Kuchma and his various prime ministers, notably Yushchenko, hyperinflation was reined in and the economy somewhat stabilized in the last few years. Today, as an Associated Press (19 November) article put it, Ukraine exhibits "a mix of audacious consumption and entrenched poverty." While the cheapest model in one car showroom in Kiev goes for $48,000, elderly pensioners nearby try to survive on $53 a month. The gross domestic product is now climbing at the rate of 11 to 13 percent a year and the stock market jumped 100 percent in the past year. What fuels this prosperity for the new bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie is the massive looting of formerly state-owned industry and the intense exploitation of a highly trained and educated proletariat. At $160 per month, average labor costs (including taxes and social benefits) are far lower than they are even in neighboring Poland, where they average $400 a month.

The appetite among the Ukrainian bourgeoisie for greater investment from the West, which already accounts for 80 percent of all direct foreign investment, has exacerbated the tensions between those looking to maintain Ukraine's traditional ties to Russia and those seeking to draw closer to the U.S. and the European Union (EU). Despite its current pro-Russian posture, the Ukrainian regime has continuously tried to suck up to U.S. imperialism since the counterrevolution, agreeing to Washington's dictates to destroy its nuclear arsenal (for a price) and deploying troops to participate in the colonial occupation of Iraq. For that matter, Putin's Russia has been more than willing to act as soft cops for U.S./NATO imperialism when the situation availed itself, as in Kosovo in 1999, and heartily

continued on page 12

Spartacist

Rally by striking Ukrainian miners, 1993. Banners include: "Nationalism Shall Not Pass!"

Defend Pro-Palestinian, Minority Student Groups at Toronto's York University!

Cops Off Campus!

The following November 12 letter, reprinted from Spartacist Canada *No. 143 (Winter 2004/2005), was originally submitted by the York Spartacus Youth Club to the* Excalibur *campus newspaper following massive financial cuts to the funding of several student organizations. Now, outrageously, the York administration is gunning for Jewish professor David Noble for his exposure of the influence of pro-Israeli lobbyists on the York University Foundation (YUF).*

SPARTACIST CANADA

We of the Spartacus Youth Club, a Marxist organization on campus, protest the York university administration's current campaign of intimidation against pro-Palestinian activists. In reaction to a vigil for victims of Israel's incursion in the Gaza Strip, the administration drew up a list of "usual suspects." Known activists were called in for meetings with the administration and security and some were issued warnings for the "crime" of issuing leaflets in defense of the Palestinians. This is blatant intimidation, an attempt to send a message to political activists.

In the context of the imperialist global "War on Terror," there has been a huge crackdown on radicalism on campuses all over North America, including York University. For example, the case of Dan Freeman-Maloy, a pro-Palestinian left-wing activist, who was expelled for his political activities on and off campus. Other examples are the complete ban of political discussion on the Middle East at Concordia [University in Montreal] after the protest against war criminal Netanyahu in September 2002 as well as the witchhunt on pro-Palestinian professors across the U.S. by Campus Watch.

We also write to speak out against the current call for increased security here at York, as well as the funding cuts to the York University Black Student Alliance, the Trans Bisexual Lesbian Gay at York and the Aboriginal Student Association. The current right-wing regime of the YFS [York Federation of Students] has cut down 90% of the funding of YUBSA, TBLGAY and the ASA. This is not about conservative fiscal policy but sending a message to minority groups to "stay in their place." The administration and the student government use funding as a bludgeon over the heads of student organizations to exercise political control through financial dependency—that's why we in the Spartacus Youth Club don't accept a penny from them.

Another point in the newly passed bylaws is that none of the university groups can in any way assist any charitable/volunteer organizations off the university campus. It is regarding this that another YFS representative commented: "There is no chance for student money to support terrorists in Chechnya or any bigoted and oppressive causes which might appear charitable to others." Now, the YFS is going after OPIRG [Ontario Public Interest Research Group], openly calling it "extremely divisive." Waiting to take back the YFS at the next student elections is a big mistake. Leftist activists and all students who defend the right to free speech must protest now.

Young Spartacus/Canada

Toronto, November 25: York students protest against administration crackdown on left-wing activists.

Meanwhile, throughout the semester, the *Excalibur* has been busy enlightening readers in sensational fashion that security guards are being "held back" by the current administration and are not allowed to interfere and protect the students when the need arises. The article comes with quotes from some disgruntled campus cowboys that are quite upset that they are not allowed to carry around sticks and pepper spray, like "real cops" do.

What is the real role of the security guards and cops on campus? They're not there to make sure that women get home safe at night, they're there to protect the property rights of corporate sponsors and interests who have turned the university into a shopping mall. An increase of campus security will also mean an increase in racist harassment.

The situation at York mirrors what is going on on a bigger scale. The increased security everywhere is a part of the racist "War on Terror," which targets current, as well as those that will be the future working class, especially immigrants and minorities. But everyone on campus is affected by the "chill effect" that the administration/YFS is implementing. Students interested in fighting the "War on Terror" on campus, as well as the broader attacks on immigrants and working people being waged by Canadian, American and other imperialists abroad, check out the Spartacus Youth Club. No reprisals against student activists! Cops off campus! For student/worker/teacher control of universities! ■

Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad!

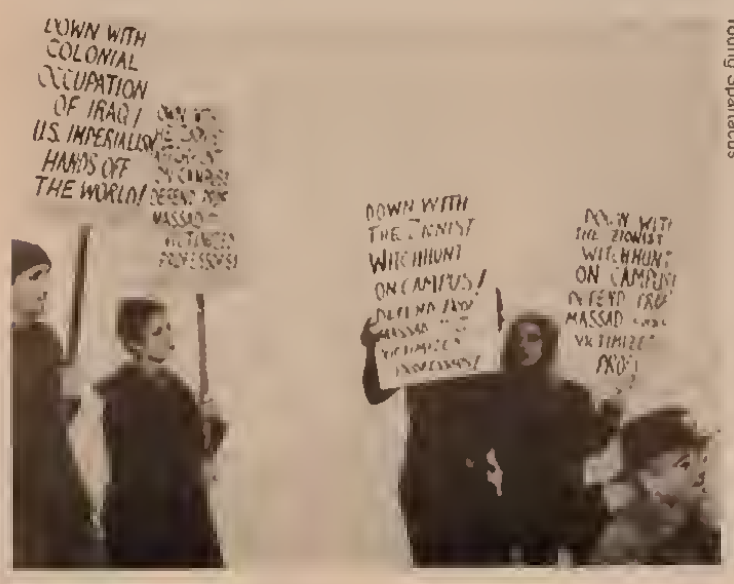
About 60 people attended a press conference December 7 at Columbia University organized by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Academic Freedom, in response to a Zionist campaign to silence defenders of the Palestinian people such as Joseph Massad and other Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) professors. The Ad Hoc Committee, dominated by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), banned the Spartacus Youth Club from speaking from the podium because the strategy of militant united-front protest that we fought for on campus runs counter to their polite appeals to the university administration.

SYC member and Columbia student Quincy Lehr spoke from the floor as a reporter for *Young Spartacus*. Lehr said: "Columbia has a history of oppressing black Harlem, of union-busting like we saw last spring with the GSEU strike.... Why is it that the coalition has put its opposition to the Zionist intimidation into toothless appeals to Bollinger, rather than seeking to mobilize more broadly?" SYC supporters flanked the room with placards, including: "Hands Off MEALAC! Defend Prof. Massad and the Other Victimized Professors!" A *WV* reporter also spoke, calling for taking down the gates of Columbia to let Harlem and the barrio in and for free education. We reprint below a letter sent by the SYC to Lee Bollinger, president of Columbia University, on December 2.

* * *

Ultra-Zionist and right-wing forces, including in the media, have been on a vicious smear campaign against professors in the Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures Department, most notably targeting Professor Joseph Massad. Your administration has launched an investigation at the behest of these forces. There is nothing to investigate! The threats against Professor Massad and other MEALAC professors are part of a nationwide campaign led by the likes of Campus Watch's Daniel Pipes and racist ideologues like David Horowitz—right-wing forces with close links to the Bush administration and/or the upper echelons of the Republican Party. In the context of U.S. imperialism's bloody occupation of Iraq and the post-September 11 bipartisan "war on terror," the aim of this sinister campaign is to silence political dissent and to roll back the campuses to something resembling the McCarthyite witchhunt period. It has already had a chilling effect on Columbia. A regular recipient of death threats, Professor Massad declared in a statement responding to the charges in the film *Columbia Unbecoming* by the David Project: "With this campaign against me going into its fourth year, I chose under the duress of coercion and intimidation not to teach my course this year. ***It is my academic freedom that has been circumscribed. But not only mine.***"

The Spartacus Youth Club adds its voice to the many around the world who defend Professor Massad against this witchhunt. We demand that the Columbia administration keep its hands off Professor Massad and other MEALAC professors, and that there be absolutely no victimizations of these professors.■



Young Spartacus

Columbia University, December 7: SYC supporters and others raise placards in defense of Massad at Ad Hoc Committee press conference.

Spartacus Youth Club Events

BAY AREA

Saturday, December 11, 4 p.m.
Communism:
What It Is and What It Isn't
1634 Telegraph Ave., Oakland
(around the corner from 19th St. BART)
Information: (510) 839-0851
or e-mail: slbayarea@sbcglobal.net

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, December 11, 2 p.m.
The Russian Revolution
3806 Beverly Blvd., Room 215
(Beverly/Vermont Red Line station)
Information and readings: (213) 380-8239
or e-mail: slsycla@sbcglobal.net

BOSTON

Wednesday, December 15, 6:30 p.m.
Spartacus Youth Club
Video Showing and Discussion of
From Death Row:
This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!
45 Mount Auburn St., Harvard Square
Information: (617) 666-9453
or e-mail: bostonsyc@yahoo.com

ICL Web Site:
www.icl-fi.org

The Founding of the Trotskyist Group of Greece

To order Greek-language edition of ICL's "International Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" ($1.00) and "Agreement for Common Work" with Greek comrades, "For a Leninist Party in Greece! For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!" ($.50), make checks payable/mail to: Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377 GPO, New York, NY 10116.

The following was published in Greek in November 2004.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is pleased to announce the founding of the Trotskyist Group of Greece, as a sympathizing section. The Greek comrades were won to the program of the ICL over a period of time through debate over programmatic differences and testing our agreement in common work.

The first contact with the ICL was made in 1995 by Spiros, a leader of the Socialist Workingmen's Organization (SOE) which split in 1994 from the Stalinophobic fake-Trotskyist Morenoite tendency. In 1996 the majority of the SOE founded the Revolutionary Workers Communist Organization (KOEE). In January 1999, Spiros resigned from the KOEE and began to correspond with the ICL, which had been sending literature to the KOEE since 1998. In May-June 1999, the KOEE leadership purged elements perceived as sympathetic to the ICL when our principled opposition to imperialist war against Serbia found a hearing among some members. Some of those thus expelled undertook to study the ICL program and in March 2000 formed an informal discussion group. In January 2001 the members of this study circle wrote to a group of ex-members of the Communist League-Workers Power (KSEE), a 1995 split-off from the SOE, and in March 2001 constituted a discussion group with these ex-KSEE members.

The Trotskyist Group of Greece was founded by comrades who fought on the question of women's oppression in Greece and split from Spiros, primarily over the need to champion the rights of Greece's oppressed minorities, a crucial question for a Leninist-Trotskyist organization in a Balkan country.

The ICL's record of fighting against counterrevolution in the DDR [East Germany] was central to the recruitment of the TGG comrades. In the "Agreement for Common Work" printed below we make clear that we stand counterposed to organizations like the Socialist Workers Party (SEK—affiliated to the British SWP), International Workers Left (DEA—ISO) and the Taaffeite *Xekinima*, which backed Yeltsin's counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1991-1992 and, in the latter case, even had supporters present on Yeltsin's barricades. While preparing for a class on capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, one of the Greek comrades wrote in June 2000:

> "I studied anew Trotsky's books *The Class Nature of the Soviet Union*, *The Revolution Betrayed* and the "Declaration of Principles" of the ICL. Thereafter, together with our own discussions I consider that the positions of the ICL on the question of Afghanistan are consistent with our ideology and I agree with them on the basis of the defense of a bureaucratically degenerated workers state against the threat of the bourgeois counterrevolution.
>
> "In regard to the question of China, what I consider applies is what Trotsky maintained in 1933, when he fought against the conception that the bureaucracy had already destroyed the Soviet workers state: Trotskyists judge that situation as dangerous but not desperate and they consider it an act of cowardice to announce that the revolutionary fight has been lost before the fight and without a fight."

Reuters

Mass demonstration in Athens during April 2001 general strike against attacks on pensions.

In November 2000 another comrade left the KSEE after fighting in that organization for the position of defending China as a deformed workers state.

On the National Question

The Balkan peninsula is a region with myriad interpenetrated peoples and oppressed minorities. An equitable resolution of the national question in the Balkans requires a socialist federation. The ICL recognizes that the question of Macedonia is a test of the authenticity of any group claiming to be internationalist in Greece. The TGG defends the national rights of the Macedonian minority in Greece, including their right to set up their own state or unite with the existing state of Macedonia. ***For full democratic rights for national minorities in Greece! For a Balkan socialist federation!***

On this basis we were won to the ICL's program, strongly opposing Greek national chauvinism, following in Trotsky's footsteps in his discussion with the Archio-Marxists on the Macedonian question:

> "It's not our task to organize nationalist uprisings. We merely say that if the Macedonians want it, we will then side with them, that they should be allowed to decide, and we will also support their decision. What disturbs me is not so much the question of the *Macedonian peasants*, but rather whether there isn't a touch of chauvinist poison in *Greek workers*. That is very dangerous. For us, who are for a Balkan federation of soviet states, it is all the same if Macedonia belongs to this federation as an autonomous whole or part of another state. However, if the Macedonians are oppressed by the bourgeois government, or feel that they are oppressed, we must give them support."
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> —Leon Trotsky, "A Discussion on Greece," Spring 1932, in *Writings of Leon Trotsky Supplement (1929-33)* (Pathfinder, 1979)

The split inside the group in Greece came to a head over Spiros' refusal to recognize and fight against the national oppression of the Arvanites—an Orthodox Christian minority of Albanian descent who migrated to what is now Greece during the Middle Ages. The Arvanites have been forcibly Hellenized and face hideous discrimination and punishments even for speaking their own language in public.

To simply mention that national minorities exist in Greece is not merely taboo, it carries the risk of prosecution. In 2001, Vlach activist Sotiris Bletsas was dragged through the courts for distributing a leaflet that stated there are five linguistic minorities in Greece. Bletsas' acquittal after an appeal is regarded as a landmark legal decision because it tacitly accepts that Arvanitika, Vlach, Macedonian, Turkish and Pomak are spoken on Greek soil. We defended Bletsas against the Greek bourgeois state in our intervention during the Polytechnic demonstrations in 2001.

Under capitalist rule, anti-Roma [Gypsy] racism has been rife throughout the Balkans. In Greece, 137 Roma were forced to move from their houses which were located in the vicinity of the Olympic Stadium construction site. Roma, along with Albanian immigrants, have increasingly been the victims of brutal police violence. One Albanian was murdered and around 100 injured after a football match between Greece and Albania in early September and racist mobs attacked Albanians in several cities, including Athens and Thessaloniki. Albanian immigrants in Greece number around one million people. Immigrants are not merely victims of racist terror but an integral part of the proletariat, which confirms the importance of our call for the workers movement to defend immigrants and to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. The defense of the rights of oppressed nationalities and immigrants is the only means by which the proletariat, consisting of workers of different ethnicities, can be united in the struggle for socialist revolution.

Another key question for revolutionaries in Greece is combatting anti-Turkish Greek chauvinism in regard to Cyprus, as we state in the "Agreement for Common Work." Any proletarian, internationalist perspective for Cyprus needs to begin with the call for the immediate withdrawal of all the Greek troops from Cyprus, as well as the Turkish army, the British troops and bases and the UN contingent!

The Greek Orthodox church is a central pillar of the Greek capitalist order and fuels national chauvinism, directed particularly against Turkish people and against all Muslims, enforcing the ties between the Greek working class and its exploiters. An example of the sinister, chauvinist role of the Church was seen in

2000 when proposals by the then-PASOK government that would have removed the documenting of a person's religion on national identity cards were met with reactionary mobilizations led by the Orthodox clergy. We are for the separation of church and state!

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

The main institution for the oppression of women is the family. For the ruling class the family serves as the vehicle for transmitting private property from one generation to the next while serving in general as a mechanism for regimenting the population through the inculcation of conservative social values. Thus, the liberation of women cannot be achieved without the abolition of the system of private property. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie through proletarian revolution and the extension of that revolution to the more advanced industrial countries, establishing the material foundations for a socialist society of material abundance, will lay the basis for the replacement of the family.

In Greece, women did not have the right to vote until 1956, while the dowry was only formally abolished in 1986 and in reality still exists. Although abortion was legalized (with severe restrictions) in 1986, it is difficult to obtain, particularly for teenagers and poor women. We are for free abortion on demand!

Following the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and East Europe, women workers in Greece, as elsewhere, have been those most affected by the capitalists' attacks on the working masses. Working mothers have faced the closure of public nurseries and kindergartens. We fight for free, quality health care and for free, 24-hour childcare.

Greek society is extremely homophobic, as was demonstrated recently by the case of the Mega Channel TV broadcaster, which was fined €100,000 for showing a gay kiss in its *Close Your Eyes* series. In counterposition to the homophobic Greek left we seek to act as a Leninist tribune of the oppressed and defend the democratic rights of homosexuals, including their right to marriage and to have children. All consensual forms of sexuality should be private and the state or church must not intervene. We call for "state and church out of the bedroom."

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The Greek Communist Party (KKE) is a mass reformist party with major influence and roots in the working class. Unlike the Stalinophobic Greek fake Trotskyists, we do not ignore the KKE, but seek to win its working-class base to the genuine communism of Lenin and Trotsky. As we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* No. 565 (11 December 1992):

> "The KKE is the historic mass party of the Greek working class. Its partisan struggle against the Nazi wartime occupation and in the civil war that broke out in 1944 gave it great authority. That authority was duly abused to block the seizure of power by the working class at the end of the war, when the Communist Party, as in France and Italy, made peace with the bourgeoisie, disarmed the working class and entered into a popular-front capitalist government to rebuild the Greek capitalist state machine. This 1945 betrayal did not prevent the bourgeoisie, aided and abetted by British and U.S. imperialism, from turning on the Communists, renewing the civil war and slaughtering thousands in a campaign designed to break the potential for working-class revolution.
>
> "The defeat of the KKE-led forces in 1949, conforming to Stalin's postwar settlement with Churchill that gave Greece to imperialism, paved the way for a series of rightist regimes culminating in the infamous colonels' dictatorship of 1967-74. Despite this history, the goal of the KKE has remained to find its way back into the corridors of capitalist power."

Thessaloniki, June 2003: Police rampage against leftist protesters outside European Union meeting.

While the KKE is a mass reformist workers party, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) is a bourgeois-populist formation and has been so from its foundation. In contrast to elements on the Greek left, such as the Cliffites, we reject on principle any political support to this party of the class enemy.

The Greek comrades worked together with comrades from the ICL long before the section was founded. In this collaboration we produced a number of leaflets, translating key articles—e.g., "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program," "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories," "Women's Liberation and the Struggle Against Imperialist Subjugation" and others. We wrote a statement in defense of the arrested anarchists and other protesters in Thessaloniki in 2003 against state repression. We defend and call for the immediate release of all those jailed in the roundup of the ELA and "17 November" groups [two groups that grew out of opposition to the rule of the military junta in Greece from 1967-74; they generally targeted representatives of the bourgeois state and imperialism]. When the oppressed act against the bourgeoisie and its state, we defend them against capitalist repression; however, we oppose the desperate petty-bourgeois strategy of individual terrorism which is antithetical to the task of rendering the proletariat conscious that it is the only class with the historic interest and social force to smash capitalist exploitation.

The comrades of the Trotskyist Group of Greece, section of the ICL, are committed to building a party that represents the interests of the multiethnic working class and champions the rights of all the oppressed—women, homosexuals, youth, immigrants and ethnic minorities. It is necessary to fight for the political independence of the proletariat in order to overthrow the capitalist order by successful proletarian revolution.

Agreement for Common Work Between Greek Comrades and the ICL (FI)

1. The current group in Greece originated from a split within a group that had been having discussions with the ICL since 1999. The reason for the split was a months-long fight over the national question—the defense of the rights of national minorities in Greece and opposition to Greek national chauvinism. There were previously fights with others in the original group about the Russian question, the centrality of the woman question in Greece, the general strike question and the party question. As an excuse for breaking with the ICL over these questions, a minority of the group cynically accused the ICL of "centrism" and "chauvinism" when the bombing against Afghanistan began in October 2001 (*International Internal Bulletin* No. 54).

2. Comrades of the Greek group came to the politics of the ICL through fights and subsequent splits centered on the Russian question. Two members had split from the [ex-Morenoite] Communist League/Workers Power group over the defense of the Chinese deformed workers state, while another comrade of the original group wrote a document supporting the intervention of the ICL into the DDR in 1989-90. Another comrade of the current group came from the Greek Communist Party. Given the influence that the CP has in the Greek working class, it is the main obstacle, so it is very important for the future of the group that an ex-member of the CP is one of the Greek comrades. The group stands for the unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—and for proletarian political revolution against the bureaucracy. We came to agree with the ICL's analysis of the collapse of Stalinism in East Europe through studying the "Documents and Discussion on the Collapse of Stalinism" by Seymour and St. John in *Spartacist* No. 45-46 (Winter 1990-91), on which a comrade of the ICL gave a presentation. The Greek group agrees with the position of the ICL on Afghanistan, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan." There is initial agreement with the ICL's position on Poland, although it has not been discussed in the current group. We reject the Stalinophobia of the anti-communist Greek pseudo-Trotskyists who refuse to intervene into the Greek Communist Party—a mass pro-Soviet Stalinist party that has the support of the most advanced sections of the Greek working class and youth.

More than 200,000 rally outside heavily guarded U.S. embassy in Athens during four-hour nationwide strike against U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, March 2003.

3. Greece is a Balkan country, and it is the only Balkan country to which the October Revolution did not extend. And the Greek capitalist state is the only one in the Balkans that does not recognize any national minority. A Trotskyist group in Greece must fight against Greek chauvinism and defend the rights of national minorities—which are forcibly Hellenized—the Macedonians, Vlachs, Pomaks, Turks, Cham (Muslim) Albanians and the Arvanites, etc., including the right of self-determination, especially for the Macedonian and Albanian minorities. It is also important to defend the rights of the persecuted Roma people. The comrades fight against Greek chauvinist poison inside the working class. The resolution of the myriad national questions in the Balkans requires a socialist federation of the Balkans.

4. A Trotskyist group must be a Leninist "tribune of the people." And for Greece, where the ultra-reactionary Orthodox church has enormous influence, the oppression of women is extreme. The Greek "holy trinity" of "homeland-religion-family" which the capitalist state promotes is strongly connected with the national and the woman questions. A central issue for Trotskyists must be the fight for the liberation of women through socialist revolution and opposition to women's oppression. We fight for full democratic rights for homosexuals, in opposition to the male-chauvinist, homophobic Greek society and the Greek left. We are for the separation of church and state.

5. The Greek comrades stand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. They have already carried out many interventions, both in common work with comrades of the ICL and by themselves, into immigrant demonstrations. Immigrants—Albanian, Kurd, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Russian, Iraqi, Palestinian, etc.—have become a key component of the proletariat in Greece and the Greek group has to fight for the unity of the proletariat against any kind of racism.

6. The group agrees with the position of the ICL on the recent war on Iraq and the Afghanistan war in 2001. The Greek group fought under the slogans: Defend Iraq against the imperialist attack of the U.S. and its allies! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All American and allied troops out of the Near East now! We called for class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home in counterposition to the Greek left, which had a very parochial position: "No Greek participation in the Iraq war" and also against the pacifism of the antiwar movement "Stop the War." We supported the blockade of the American Souda base and we intervened in the workers strikes against the war. We

continued on page 9

Jonquière, Quebec

Union Victory Against Wal-Mart

For a Fighting Labor Movement! Organize the Unorganized!

The article below was published in Spartacist Canada *No. 143 (Winter 2004/2005), newspaper of the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, Canadian section of the International Communist League.*

SPARTACIST CANADA

When Wal-Mart workers in Jonquière won union recognition in August it was international news. Everywhere, workers who have been on the receiving end of layoffs and union-busting cheered a victory against the labour-hating retail giant. It was a hard-fought battle and the 170 mostly women workers were justly proud. A few months earlier, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) drive at the store was set back after a union vote narrowly lost. A 2002 effort to unionize was also defeated. For now, the Jonquière store is the only unionized Wal-Mart north of Mexico.

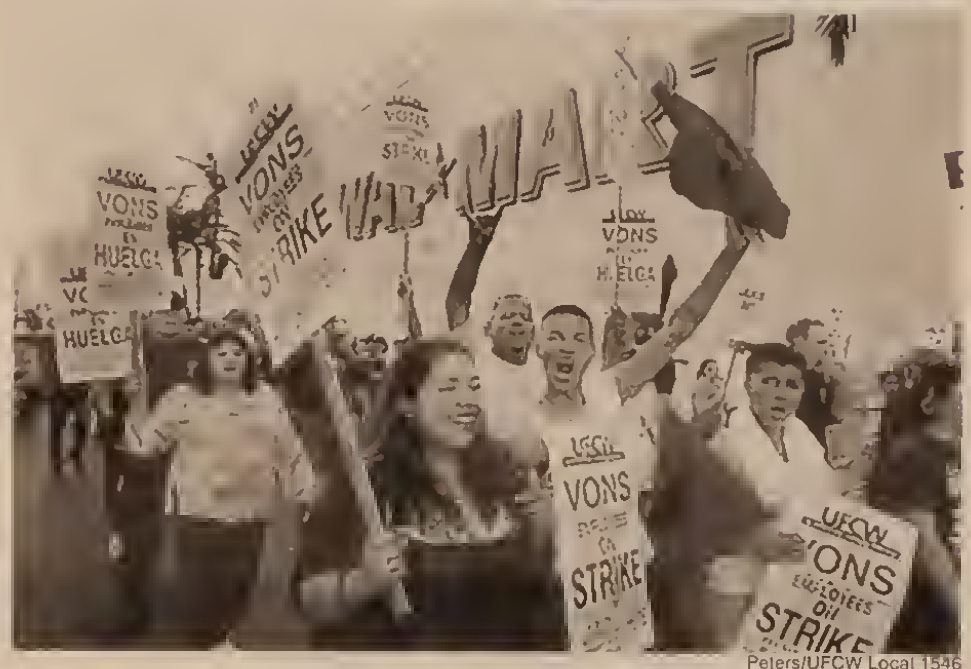
Now comes the struggle for a first contract. It won't be easy to beat the union-busting weapons in Wal-Mart's arsenal and win more than the starvation wages—about $7.60 to $8.60 an hour—and terrible working conditions at Wal-Mart. In 1997, the UFCW organized a Windsor, Ontario store but the union was decertified. Wal-Mart meatcutters in Jacksonville, Texas won union recognition only to have the boss shut down its meatcutting operations. Now Wal-Mart threatens to close its Jonquière store, whining that it is suddenly unprofitable.

Wal-Mart is the biggest retailer on the planet. Sales in 2004 are pegged at $256 billion (U.S.)—more than the GDP of Austria. It's the biggest private employer in the U.S., and in Mexico it controls half the grocery business. In Canada, with 234 stores and six Sam's Clubs, in just ten years Wal-Mart has cornered half the department store market.

What is the source of Wal-Mart's huge profits? They do what capitalists do: squeeze workers to the bone with poverty wages, keep out the union and undercut competitors. To stay "union free," Wal-Mart will stop at nothing. A company manual instructs managers that "Staying union free is a full-time commitment.... The secret of staying union free is the internal elimination of problems." And that means threats, intimidation and firing for anyone who looks sideways at a union.

Boissinot/CP

Right: Wal-Mart workers in Jonquière, Canada won union recognition in August. This victory should be catalyst for union organizing drive against Wal-Mart in U.S. Below: UFCW strikers march outside Wal-Mart store in California, October 2003.



Peters/UFCW Local 1546

Wal-Mart's success is a reflection of the grim state of affairs for unionized workers in North America. In the U.S. today, the unionization rate is just 13 percent. In Canada, it is much higher at 30.5 percent. But this is deceptive: in the private sector, the rate has plummeted in just a generation from 26 percent in 1977 to just 18 percent today. Behind this number is the story of relentless attacks on workers, unions and livelihoods, compounded by a labour leadership that has pushed concessions and givebacks down the workers' throats.

The drive to organize Wal-Mart is a key challenge for all of labour: turn back the tide of defeats and start moving forward, or lose yet more ground to the profit-bloated capitalists. The UFCW has also applied for recognition in Brossard and Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. In Terrace, B.C. [British Columbia], Weyburn, Saskatchewan and again in Windsor, UFCW organizers are signing up Wal-Mart workers. At seven B.C. Wal-Mart Tire & Lube Express departments, workers signed cards with UFCW Local 1518.

A successful fight to organize Wal-Mart across Canada could be a springboard for a powerful organizing drive south of the border. But beating back this viciously anti-union outfit requires breaking with the UFCW leadership's legalist strategy of relying on labour boards and other agencies of the capitalist state. The labour movement has powerful tactics and traditions that can forge unions and win strikes: mass pickets, hot cargo edicts (secondary boycotts), plant and building occupations, political solidarity strikes. Key to winning union recognition and a decent contract for Wal-Mart workers will be active solidarity by the longshore, trucking and rail unions who can stop the flow of goods to the stores and distribution centers.

Capitalist Profiteering and the Decline of Labour

Wal-Mart is poised to enter the supermarket business in Canada, now dominated by the all-Canadian grocery giant Loblaws, owned by the fabulously wealthy Weston family. Karl Marx was right on the money when he described the tendency of capitalism toward monopoly. Two decades ago, there were some 20 major supermarket operators in Canada. Today Loblaws is by far the largest national food chain, having driven out most of its competitors.

In the 1970s, a union job in a supermarket looked fairly secure and you could get by on your paycheck. The industry is still heavily unionized—at Loblaws, about 85 percent. But after years of the union tops bowing to the companies' attacks, the jobs pay only a bit better than Wal-Mart, are part-time and have multi-tier wage schemes that set workers against each other. In B.C. in the late 1980s when Loblaws opened its Real Canadian Superstores, at the company's behest the UFCW tops created a new second-class local with lower wages and conditions for the 8-9,000 workers hired over the next decade.

In 2003, the UFCW tops did another dirty deal, this time in Ontario where Loblaws plans to open superstores. Invoking the Wal-Mart bogey, Loblaws got the UFCW misleaders to ram through an appendix to Local 1000a's current contract enforcing lower pay and benefits, no sick days, no Sunday premiums and no Christmas bonus for people at the new stores. Brazenly calling this stinker a "no concessions" package, the union brass agreed to Loblaws' demand that the 12,000-strong Local 1000a not be allowed to vote on it! As Wal-Mart and Loblaws battle for supremacy, both are waging a relentless war on current and future workers, slashing wages and conditions and keeping out the union or rendering it housebroken.

In the U.S., too, the bosses use the Wal-Mart spectre to gut union jobs and wages. A year ago, 60,000 UFCW workers waged a bitter strike against the Southern California supermarket bosses. But instead of mobilizing the collective, countrywide strength of the union, each region was left to negotiate separately. Hundreds of thousands of workers also fighting for new contracts were kept chained to the job. Massive support from other unions, including an eight-hour port shutdown by ILWU longshoremen in Los Angeles, bolstered the strike, but it was not mobilized on the picket lines and at distribution centers. Faced with a drawn-out battle and a leadership opposed to doing what was needed to win, the strikers returned to work after five months with a deeply concessionary contract that includes a three-year wage freeze and a pernicious two-tier wage scheme (see "UFCW Strike and Class Struggle in America," *WV* Nos. 821 and 822, 5 and 19 March).

Workers and Bosses Have No Interests in Common

A serious North American organizing drive against Wal-Mart would resonate among workers everywhere. But victory requires a class-struggle perspective counterposed to the narrow pro-capitalist outlook of the current union leadership. Wal-Mart is committed to *its* class interests. As one union organizer put it, "They are very disciplined, and they've got a program" (*Nation*, 28 June). The workers and their unions need that same hard-nosed *class* understanding. Yet the union leadership instead pushes the class-collaborationist lie that workers and their bosses share a common interest.

This is seen most starkly in the view that increased profits for the bosses benefit the workers. In a memo to Local 1000a justifying their sellout deal with Loblaws, the UFCW tops were explicit: "...a more successful and profitable company will be able to provide more job security and stability." The experience of millions of workers who are ruined while they see the bosses amass vast wealth shows how false this is. As Karl Marx explained in *Wage-Labour and Capital*: "A rapid growth of capital is synonymous with rapid growth of profits. Profits can grow rapidly only when the price of labour—the relative wages—decrease just as rapidly...."

The union tops invariably urge workers to rely on capitalist governments and courts. In places like B.C. and Ontario, the UFCW puts its hopes in electing NDP [New Democratic Party] governments which they expect will undo provincial anti-union laws. But the NDP is no "friend of labour." It's a social-democratic party committed in every way to the capitalist system. Just look how they sabotaged the recent HEU hospital workers strike in B.C., helping ram through a wretched give-back deal just as the province was on the edge of a general strike

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in solidarity with the HEU. For every pro-union platitude muttered in opposition, when it's in power the NDP rules in the bosses' interests, breaking strikes and slashing social services.

In the U.S., labour is disarmed by the union leadership's allegiance to the capitalist Democratic Party. Andrew Stern, president of the Service Employees International Union, bemoaned the low unionization rate as an electoral liability: "When only 13 percent of the American work force is in unions, our ability to win national elections is limited" (*New York Times*, 10 November). Stern is calling on the AFL-CIO to use the $25 million-a-year Union Plus credit card royalties to organize Wal-Mart and double the amount spent on organizing. But the AFL-CIO spent six times that—over $150 million—to get out the vote for Democrat John Kerry. Bush's win is bad news for workers, but Kerry's election would not have been good news. Like the Republicans, the Democrats are a ruling-class party dedicated to the interests of the American capitalists, which are counterposed to those of workers, blacks and all the oppressed.

The union misleaders pound workers with the idea that the bosses' state—its courts and cops—can be an ally in their struggles. Countless strikes have foundered because of this. In the struggle to unionize Wal-Mart, many of the union drives in B.C. and Quebec are tied up waiting for labour board decisions. As a strategy, this demobilizes workers. Far from neutral, these boards are a weapon of the boss class, and they often back Wal-Mart.

A UFCW Canada pamphlet against Wal-Mart is called "Blowing the Whistle on a Neighbourhood Bully." One of its political themes is protectionism. "Blowing the Whistle" points the finger at cheap foreign labour in Myanmar and Thailand, and tries to scandalize Wal-Mart by pointing out that its "Made in Canada" label on manufactured goods is bogus. But Canadian capitalists are not a shred better than their U.S. counterparts. Look at Loblaws! Capitalists go where they will make the greatest profits, and they will always try to drive down wages and conditions. Protectionism doesn't save jobs. It does undermine the international class struggle needed to win, especially against global conglomerates like Wal-Mart, setting workers against each other instead of the capitalist bosses.

Protectionism, the idea that Canadian workers have interests counterposed to workers in other countries, is not unique to the UFCW leaders. Buzz Hargrove's CAW autoworkers union trumpets a "progressive," social unionism. But the CAW leadership vituperates against Japanese and Korean cars, undercutting international solidarity and the unity of workers

Potvin/FTQ

Jonquière, Canada: Mass demonstration in support of militant occupation of Alcan's Arvida smelter, January.

here, themselves of myriad nationalities and races. And for all Hargrove's militant posturing, many workers at A&P and Dominion stores, organized by the CAW's Retail Wholesale division, are also subjected to multi-tier wage schemes, their pay starting at around the minimum wage.

In Canada and the U.S., the union tops rail against China. Wal-Mart is the eighth largest buyer of exported goods from China. These goods are largely produced in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by firms usually owned at least in part by outside capitalists. This China bashing serves the U.S. imperialists and their Canadian junior partners in the counterrevolutionary crusade to open up China to full-scale capitalist exploitation, turning it into a giant sweatshop.

The union tops' fulminations against China do double duty, both pushing anti-Communism and scapegoating a "foreign enemy" for the loss of jobs, instead of fighting capitalism at home. Just as workers defend their unions—despite the sell-out leaders—against the bosses, workers must defend China against imperialist-backed counterrevolution despite the Chinese bureaucracy's accommodation to the capitalist market.

For a Fighting Labour Movement to Bring Wal-Mart to Its Knees!

What will it take to organize Wal-Mart? In a sense, the answer to this is also the answer to the question: How to turn around the situation for the working class? Militant tactics don't guarantee victory, even if the struggle is led by class-struggle Marxists. But class struggle is the only way workers have won or held on to significant gains. The problem is the present union leaders limit their program and aims, and for the most part their tactics, to what is acceptable to the bosses.

Organizing Wal-Mart, especially as it moves into the multiracial urban areas of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, requires consciously fighting the anti-immigrant racism and chauvinism the bosses use to poison union struggles. During last year's UFCW strike, U.S. "Homeland Security" agents raided 60 Wal-Marts, rounding up 250 undocumented workers. Instead of fighting to defend these desperate immigrant workers, the UFCW bureaucrats—who say they want to organize Wal-Mart—did nothing to mobilize the union in their behalf.

Immigrants are a big component of the Canadian working class, and in Toronto, comprise a massive 75 percent of food industry workers. Along with their Canadian-born daughters and sons, immigrants are often in the forefront of militant class battles like the B.C. hospital workers strike last spring. The fact that Wal-Mart plays on the insecurities of immigrants who know they are vulnerable to arbitrary firings and loss of status makes concrete that the demand "Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!" is in the interests of all workers.

It's not accidental that the UFCW gained recognition first in Quebec, where the reality of national oppression has often fuelled militant class battles. The Quebec unionization rate is 41 percent, and Jonquière, and the whole Saguenay region, has a history of militant working-class struggle. Parallel to the UFCW's Wal-Mart campaign, last January Alcan workers in Jonquière occupied Alcan's Arvida smelter in a spectacular action to prevent the closure of the plant and the loss of 550 jobs. This defiance of the capitalists' sacred private property won the support of workers in the area and only ended after the Quebec Labour Relations Board ruled the action illegal.

It's good that an international union, the UFCW, is running a union drive spanning Quebec and English Canada, for this can help undercut the anti-Quebec chauvinism that is rife among Anglo-Canadian workers. For decades the labour leaders of English Canada—and especially the NDP—have pushed reactionary "Canadian unity," which is really support for the *oppression* of the Québécois nation. This undermines solidarity with the Quebec labour movement, which in the main supports independence, and drives Québécois workers into the arms of the bourgeois nationalists of the Parti Québécois. The result is a working class that is deeply divided along national lines. In English Canada militant workers must oppose Anglo chauvinism down the line and advocate Quebec independence, thus showing Quebec workers that they, not the Québécois bosses, are their true allies.

In the struggle to unionize Wal-Mart, the grinding oppression of working-class women is also a burning issue. In the biggest class-action suit in U.S. history 1.6 million former and current Wal-Mart women employees are demanding restitution for years of vicious and flagrant anti-woman discrimination. Union control of hiring, with affirmative action recruitment and training for women and minorities, would go some ways to redressing historic inequalities. For the impoverished and heavily female workforce at Wal-Mart, demands for free 24-hour child care would strike a real chord. Taking on the destruction of the health care system, the demand for decent across-the-board medical benefits must be linked to the fight for free, quality health care for all.

In the 1930s and '40s, the thousands of militants who considered themselves communists propelled the great industrial union organizing drives forward. Motivated by their ideals of building a society where those who labour rule, they knew that spiking the bosses' attacks on minorities and immigrants was crucial to victory. This must inspire today's militants who face the task of ousting the cowardly union bureaucrats and forging a new, class-struggle leadership of the unions. The fight to organize the unorganized could be the crucible in which a revolutionary workers party is forged in political struggle against the pro-capitalist labour brass and the NDP. Such a party is indispensable to unite the working class and lead it in the revolutionary overthrow of the bosses' rule. A workers government that rips the economy out of the hands of the capitalists is the only road to the creation of a truly human society in which production is for human need, not profit.■

Greece...

(continued from page 7)

called for Greek troops out of Cyprus.

7. A key question confronting Trotskyists in Greece is the question of Cyprus and our internationalist, class-struggle opposition to the anti-Turkish chauvinism of the Greek bourgeoisie. We call for the immediate withdrawal of all Greek troops from the island. We also demand the withdrawal of the Turkish army, the UN contingent and the British troops and bases. Our fight is for a proletarian solution to the national question, which of necessity requires the revolutionary overthrow of the nationalist bourgeoisies in Nicosia/Lefkosa, Athens and Ankara.

8. The group agrees on the ICL's analysis and thesis on Pabloism. We want to fight to forge a Greek section of the ICL. We have been contributing our monthly payment since May 2002. We accept the discipline of a democratic-centralist international. The International, according to Lenin and Trotsky, is the necessary tool for the fight against capitalism, for new October Revolutions and for the protection of national sections from alien class pressures. We fight against the pretenders to Trotskyism—the SWP, Taaffeites, etc.—who are an obstacle to the reforging of a Trotskyist party. We seek to build the party through splits and fusions, including from among the CP youth and the anarchist milieu.

9. Unlike the Stalinist Communist Party, which is a reformist party based on the industrial proletariat, PASOK is a bourgeois-populist political formation. While it has influence in the main trade-union federations in Greece (which are generally craft unions), PASOK's existence is not dependent on the labor movement. PASOK's origins are in the bourgeois Centre Party of George Papandreou—the father of PASOK founder Andreas—whose social base the party inherited. PASOK's ideological underpinnings are illustrated by the party's seminal 3 September [1974] founding Declaration, which combined hawkish Greek nationalism over the Cyprus issue with characteristic populist claims to represent all "dispossessed" Greek people, defined to include peasants, small businessmen, managers, etc. The 3 September Declaration is moreover one of the more leftist expressions of PASOK's politics, as it is liberally spiced with some quasi-Marxist verbiage. This "left" face was, however, jettisoned within a few years of the party's founding and any would-be "leftists" were soon expelled from the party. In contrast to elements of the Greek left, such as the Cliffites, we reject on principle any political support—including electoral support—to this party of the class enemy.

10. An important task is the reading of *Workers Vanguard* and other ICL propaganda, and continuing the reading of Marxist classics for cadre development. We should study and learn from the long and complex history of the Greek Trotskyist movement (e.g., the Greek Archio-Marxists and the Communist League of America's Greek newspaper) and make it available to the rest of the ICL. As Trotskyists in Greece we have to study about the Greek Civil War/national question/Cyprus, as well as the Trotskyist movement and its split during World War II on the Nazi occupation. The comrades need to study the ICL's statement on the imperialist bombing of Serbia and the Balkan slaughter and, with the help of the ICL, the national minorities in Greece as a part of the Balkans.

11. In order to accommodate this common work it is necessary to study the English language. It's also necessary for comrades of the ICL to study Greek.

12. As a task we have to project some modest public work in interventions through regular sales to the student milieu. In opponent meetings and in demonstrations we have already participated in common work with the ICL in Greece and in London.

13. Until it is realistic for a comrade to be able to transfer to Greece, it would be helpful for the Greek group to get more frequent visits, of longer duration. As soon as possible we need a comrade to transfer to help in the building of the section and the organizing of our political work.

14. We look forward to producing propaganda related to the class struggle in Greek society in order to intervene to give flesh to the ICL program.■

AIDS...

(continued from page 1)

white capitalists, the ANC regime has laid off thousands of workers (with unemployment among Africans running at 50 per cent), kept education as a privilege for the children of a few ANC cronies and the white racist ruling class, and shut down hospitals. They've made their calcu-

SPARTACIST SOUTH AFRICA

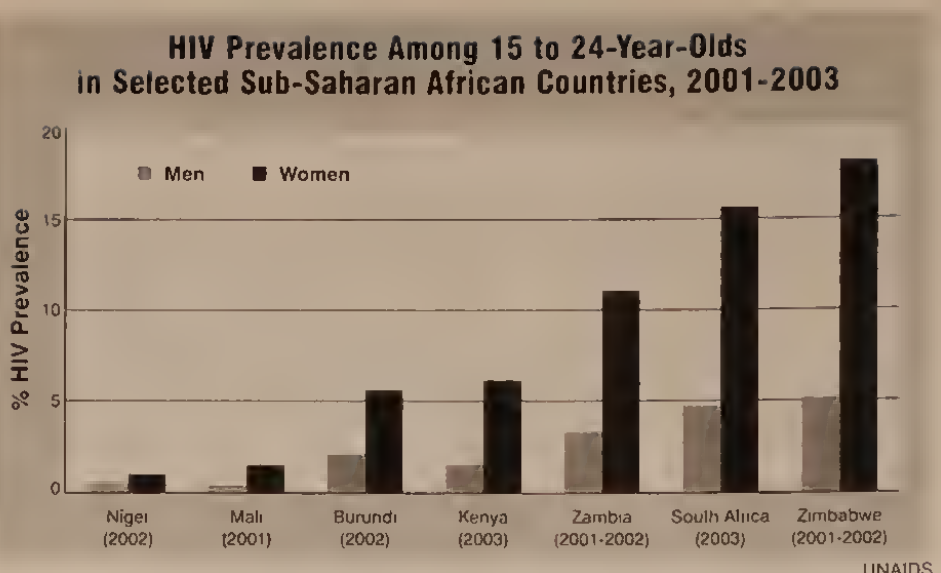
lations that all lives are not of equal value, that only the unskilled, unemployed and subsistence farmers and women will be hit. They have decided that the casualties of HIV/AIDS can continue to mount, with the grim reaper cutting down any movement demanding treatment.

This calculating hostility to the poor and defenceless is not only criminal, it is tragically wrong. This disease strikes at society's productive population, especially the working class. At least 100,000 students are without teachers because of HIV/AIDS. And yet another long-suppressed government study reveals the devastation of workers in public service. A staggering 46 per cent of adult deaths are AIDS related. The utter devaluation of human life by the ANC further underscores the brutality and inherent irrationality of the capitalist system.

South Africa Torn Apart by AIDS Crisis

Protests in South Africa have cast an intense spotlight, including internationally, on the ruling party's perfidy. The "new" stance of the ANC government is partially a concession designed to head off further struggle against its reactionary policies, especially by the working class. It's significant that unions like the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) worked out agreements with the bosses to get ARVs to strategic layers of the proletariat (in auto, gold and platinum mining) that will keep capitalism churning out profits. While these are piecemeal efforts derived from the strategic interests of the capitalists, they also reflect searing anger and resentment at the base of society.

The divisions on HIV/AIDS within the ruling ANC and South Africa as a whole run deep. A University of Cape Town economist wrote: "The cabinet was probably forced into announcing a treatment programme by the sheer weight of public pressure and by concerns to defuse the issue before the 2004 elections" (Nicoli Nattrass, *The Moral Economy of AIDS in South Africa*, 2004). In September 2003, Mbeki told the *Washington Post* he had no personal knowledge of anyone who had the virus or had died of AIDS. In a reply that resonated widely, the Afrikaner satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys said: "He lies and so condemns his nation to death.... Like when Steve Biko died the then-apartheid minister of 'Justice' Jimmy Kruger famously said: 'It leaves me cold.' South Africa leaves Thabo Mbeki cold." That October the TAC, which had earlier launched and then suspended civil disobedience that had infuriated the regime, received the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights for struggle in the "best traditions of the anti-apartheid movement." The chairman of Anglo-America, the mining giant, chimed in lauding the TAC's leadership.



UNAIDS

Africa and Imperialist Hypocrisy

For their own reasons, a number of South African and foreign capitalist interests prefer Mbeki adopt an official policy *formally* consistent with medical science. Indeed, relieving the opprobrium in which AIDS policy was viewed by the Anglo-American imperialists and the United Nations was a factor influencing the decision to announce ARV distribution. But if the imperialist powers embrace this seeming change, it is because the regionally powerful South Africa is their preferred instrument for intervention on what they call the "hopeless" continent. The ANC's extending asylum to U.S.-deposed Haitian president Aristide, opposing the war in Iraq, and supporting the Palestinian leader Arafat cannot mask the fact that the ANC is a junior partner to the bloody Bush gang. Under their rule, the South African capitalists have sharply increased investment in sub-Saharan Africa and provided troops for imperialist "peacekeeping" schemes. After the Iraq war, U.S. president Bush visited South Africa and declared that Mbeki is his point man on Zimbabwe.

The recent period has seen intensified jockeying between imperialist powers over the control of Africa. The U.S. is setting up "anti-terrorist command centres" in the eastern African countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. According to journalist Pierre Abramovici, U.S. forces have also recently been involved in a series of military operations in the Sahel, the buffer zone between the oil fields in North Africa and those of the Gulf of Guinea (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 2004). Using the "war on terror" as a pretext, the U.S. imperialists have strengthened their ties to African officer corps and are moving in to protect sources and supply lines for important primary resources like manganese, cobalt, chrome, gold, industrial diamonds and (especially) oil. Over the next ten years, Africa is projected to become the U.S.'s second most important supplier of oil after the Near East, and the imperialists are greedily eyeing reserves from western and central Africa, especially Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Angola. In response, France and other European countries have moved to reassert their "influence" in former colonies, like the Ivory Coast.

Shayne Robinson/Sapa

ANC neo-apartheid rule: police attack demonstrator at Soweto township protest against water and electricity fees in October.

Along these lines, a Pentagon official made clear that a key ingredient in regional African security "is national militaries that are capable and competent and not dying of AIDS." The forging of a special relationship with the South African military and restoring its combat readiness is a priority of the American imperialists. Recently, results of soldiers coming forward for one HIV test showed an astounding 87 per cent rate of positives, and estimates for overall infection rates range from 23 to 40 per cent. It was thus mutually satisfactory then that the U.S.'s National Institutes of Health (NIH) gave $35 million (mainly for ARVs) to the South African National Defence Force.

The U.S., Britain and other imperialist governments, despite hypocritical criticisms of Mbeki, act as enforcers for the extortionate drug monopolies. The Bush administration has waged an international campaign against generic ARVs and condoms, and manipulated ***billions*** in aid money to promote U.S. pharmaceutical interests and a reactionary Christian agenda of opposition to abortion and preaching abstinence. Since the patents for each component are held by different companies, only the generic ARVs provide necessary medication in one pill (2 or 3 in 1). This is a qualitative enhancement in economically backward countries, where access to medical treatment and transport is limited.

Cheap drugs to treat AIDS don't get to Africa because the capitalist bloodsuckers on Wall Street and in the City of London don't want them to. This doesn't stop the same pharmaceutical giants from dumping all sorts of drugs not yet approved for the West on African countries. Or worse, in the late 1990s, 15 studies on mother-to-infant transmission funded by the U.S. and the UN used a placebo instead of AZT—this, when AZT was known to effectively block this type of HIV transmission. 1,502 infants were expected to die, echoing (if not replicating!) the infamous, racist U.S.-funded Tuskegee experiment where poor blacks in the rural south were denied the known treatment for syphilis. It's within this context that Mbeki's rants about using Africans as "guinea pigs" can get a hearing from Africans outraged by the suffering they've endured.

Because they perpetuate the conditions of economic impoverishment and cultural backwardness, the imperialist powers are ultimately responsible for the horrific scope of the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. The 1980s saw a mounting economic crisis throughout most of the continent, which was compounded by IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes carried out at the behest of the imperialist bankers. The wholesale economic devastation of the continent has been deepened further by the destruction of the Soviet Union, which had acted as a counterweight to American imperialism. During the Cold War, many "Third World" regimes were able to garner economic and military aid by playing off Moscow and Washington. Driven by economic desperation and the manifest bankruptcy of African nationalism, there has been a resurgence of national, tribal and clan rivalries, leading to almost continuous warfare throughout the continent, supplemented by tribal and clan massacres. In turn, these have been cynically manipulated by the imperialists and African politicians for their own ends. The UN, the IMF, and French imperialism bear significant responsibility for the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, and intervention by the UN into Darfur, Sudan is not a solution. From HIV/AIDS to "humanitarian" relief for Sudan, the crocodile tears of concern for the plight of Africa is imperialist hypocrisy: ***All U.S./UN/British and French troops out of Africa! UN/South African troops out of Burundi and the DRC [Democratic Republic of the Congo]! Hands off Sudan!***

Women's Oppression and the Pandemic

In South Africa the face of HIV/AIDS is the African woman. As we said in *Spartacist South Africa* No. 1, devoted entirely to AIDS, the woman question is *the* burning social question here today:

> "More than with any other disease in modern history, every step in the search to control and cure HIV/AIDS has been hampered by the profit-driven capitalist system and all the backward, repressive, racist and anti-woman ideological crap that comes with it.... And because it is a sexually transmitted disease, the special oppression that women suffer under capitalism creates a major obstacle to a cure. All the guilt, shame and repressive taboos about sex that are designed to subjugate women via bourgeois morality also play a major role in sabotaging a scientific response to AIDS."

African women between the ages 15 to 24 are two and a half times as likely to be HIV-infected as their male counterparts. This disparity is partially the result of the biological fact that HIV is more easily transmitted from men to women. Sexual activity also generally starts much earlier for women, typically with partners five to seven years older (increasing their chances of infection), and often as "survival sex" for groceries, transport or school fees. This is only made worse by the widespread male insistence on *nyama enyameni* (flesh on flesh) and the common belief that AIDS is a "woman's disease."

The horrific gang rape and murder of TAC AIDS activist Lorna Mlofana in a shebeen [township bar] toilet is emblematic of the degradation and oppression of women and its intersection with HIV/AIDS. She was beaten and killed after telling her attackers she was HIV-

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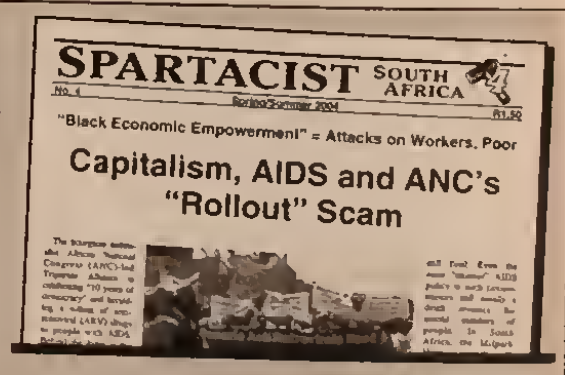
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"Black Economic Empowerment" = Attacks on Workers, Poor
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positive. Her doctor at the Khayelitsha clinic said Mlofana, a 21-year-old mother of a 3-year-old boy, had been taking anti-retroviral drugs for the past two years and was a healthy woman who courageously talked about the disease to educate and counter the stigma associated with it. We solidarise with the TAC's vigorous protest of this atrocity.

There are some 50,000 *reported* cases of rape per year in South Africa. Just under a third of high school girls indicate they are victims of rape, and 70 per cent say they have been coerced into having sexual intercourse. The myth that sex with a virgin can cure AIDS has become a further catalyst in escalating incidents of rape of young girls. One South African journalist who was raped and fought bureaucratic obstacles to get AZT to prevent HIV infection said: "We won't end this epidemic until we understand the role of tradition and religion—and of a culture in which rape is endemic and has become a prime means of transmitting the disease to young women as well as children." Mbeki labelled the journalist "racist" for this observation. In fact, traditional views are frequently comingled and overlap with the religious doctrines of the Christian church and missionaries wherein sex is made a "moral" issue, thereby reinforcing the stigma of AIDS. The control of this pandemic is inconceivable without a profound struggle against this retrograde social backwardness.

The oppression of women and children is bound up with the role of the bourgeois monogamous family under capitalism, where women are treated as property of men, slated to raise the next generation of wage slaves. The oppression of women may take an even more extreme form in the traditional African family, especially when polygamy is still sanctioned. The only solution is the destruction of the capitalist system by the working class, expropriating the capitalist class through victorious socialist revolution, and preparing the way for a classless society. Then the material basis would exist for replacing the family through collectivising household drudgery and child rearing.

Spartacist

Nurses during 1995 wildcat strike carried signs reading "Away with Mandela," denounced ANC leader as "driver of gravy train" for aspiring black capitalists. ANC government fired 6,000 nurses after strike.

The oppression and abuse of women is reinforced by the anti-working-class, anti-woman, anti-poor practices of the regime. There is a huge gulf between official policy as embodied in the "most progressive constitution in the world" and reality. Only 45 per cent of the 309 designated abortion clinics actually provide this vital procedure. Women stuck without employment outside the home care for the sick and dying, while the swelling ranks of AIDS orphans battle for survival. The ANC has never taken a public stand against the prevalent *lobola* (bride price) in which women's status is reduced to property, or female genital mutilation, still practised openly in rural areas and secretly in the townships.

Bourgeois Nationalism Is the Main Obstacle to Revolutionary Consciousness

The Western-educated Mbeki and many ANC bourgeois nationalists embrace conspiracy theories and AIDS denial. Mbeki and his ministers employ sinister race-baiting in their attacks on proponents of ARVs. In one public incident, the Minister of Health labelled the combative TAC leader Mark Heywood as a "white man" who tells "our Africans" that "you must toyi toyi [martial protest dance] here." In a speech at Fort Hare University in 2001, Mbeki slanderously ascribed the view to AIDS scientists that Africans are "germ carriers, and human beings of a lower order" who must "adopt strange options, to save a depraved and diseased people from perishing from self-inflicted disease." Likewise, the ANC expounds on the "African Renaissance" and energetically promotes the authority of "tribal leaders" and "traditional healers."

The ANC government's cynical refusal to recognise the crisis around AIDS is also underpinned by its elemental hostility on the gay question. It is common to hear that homosexual sex is not "African." The association of AIDS with homosexuals, drug users, or any other particular group has always been the ideological cover for the concrete failure to fight it. There is no such thing as a "homosexual disease" or a "heterosexual disease." HIV is a *virus*. We fight for *full democratic rights for gays and lesbians*.

Likewise, the ANC-led government orchestrates and manipulates an anti-immigrant backlash. Today, it is immigrants and asylum seekers at whose feet the scourge of AIDS is falsely laid. These migrant workers, including "illegal" immigrants, are a living link between the South African proletariat and the workers throughout the region. *Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Mbeki et al.'s "Africanist" denunciations of Western science, race-baiting and touting of "African solutions" are intended to disguise the fact that *the bourgeois-nationalist ANC regime is the main political agent of world imperialism and the South African capitalist class*. The ANC's nationalism is a wellspring for retrograde consciousness on HIV/AIDS and women's oppression. To break the chains of neo-apartheid capitalism, and achieve genuine national and social liberation, the working class must transcend the ideology of nationalism, the false belief that the black African people—brutally oppressed by the white rulers of South Africa—all have a common interest which stands higher than class divisions. All working people in this country—Zulu or Xhosa, Indian or Coloured [mixed-race], immigrant or native born, African or white—have a common interest in fighting against ANC capitalist austerity and neo-apartheid.

Economist

Powerful black proletariat creates the wealth of South Africa.

Break with the ANC-Led Tripartite Alliance!

The Tripartite Alliance between the misnamed SACP, COSATU and the ANC is a *nationalist popular front* through which the African working class and dispossessed are chained to their exploiters. The SACP and COSATU have acted as a medium for pressure at the base of society that low cost ARVs be made available. They have utilised differences over the epidemic in the ruling party to push for a formal change in the government's position on ARV distribution. But simultaneously, they are part of a division of labour that marshals support for the ANC and keeps any expression of disgruntlement with the HIV-denialist Mbeki regime confined to "safe" limits. They thus seek to shackle the oppressed to their literal executioners.

At last year's COSATU conference, the SACP/COSATU tops dismissed the idea of a split in the Tripartite Alliance and announced a long-term (to 2015) programme of cooperation. Opponents of the Alliance were told that their identities were known and they should get out. The COSATU tops and SACP quite consciously *did not* use the national stage to galvanise South African society on HIV/AIDS. Any display of indignation was buried as the Minister of Health and other ANC luminaries were in attendance. Instead Blade Nzimande, SACP general secretary, addressed COSATU on the need to renew the ANC by a massive workers infusion into it for the upcoming elections. An obligatory resolution calling on the government to dispense ARVs was passed. But the truth was captured by a reader of *Spartacist South Africa* and COSATU member, who explained to us that within COSATU itself there are inadequate structures to deal with the epidemic even as its members are dying daily.

The SACP is integral to the administration of the capitalist state, which is an instrument for the suppression of the interests of the working class and oppressed. The chairman of the SACP is Minister of Safety and Security with direct control over the police, and Ronnie Kasrils is the minister in charge of the National Intelligence Agency that has been in the vanguard of intimidation and worse of the "social movements." The SACP's role in covering the ANC's flank on HIV/AIDS will prove to be one of the singular betrayals in the sordid history of class-collaborationist (popular-front) politics.

Acting as a political auxiliary to the ANC is the TAC, a militant single-issue pressure group arising out of the mass desperation of the situation. The ANC regime has employed repression against the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) and detention and torture against the Landless Peoples Movement (LPM). TAC, another one of the "social movements," is seen to be more acceptable because of its craven political support for the ANC. (Although this didn't stop COSATU tops from warning the TAC that their short-lived civil disobedience better not challenge the "authority" of the state.) Given the unprecedented destructive scope of the epidemic, a denialist regime that withholds medicine that could save the lives of thousands, and the intransigence of the drug companies on pricing and cheaper generics, "rampant, militant protest would seem a given." But, as even the bourgeois press notes in the course of praising this group's tactics, they are merely a "whisper" on the "sliding scale of a people's revolutionary cause" (*Sunday Independent*, 7 December 2003).

On January 25th, the TAC held a "People's AIDS Forum" at Johanneshurg City Hall to build a "real partnership for implementation" with the government. At this event, the leadership policed the audience to stifle militant expressions of outrage. A person with AIDS spoke and, pointing her finger at ANC Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa, said: "We are bleeding and the government is doing nothing." When she finished, a group of youth converged to the front of the hall *toyi toying* and chanting "Manto and Mbeki are selling us out. We are going to give them one minute to get out." This prompted the TAC to say that the woman's sickness was the source of her words, so for the TAC the government was not the enemy. When Shilowa got up

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Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

Ukraine...

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embraced Bush's "war on terror"—not least in justifying its own murderous colonial occupation of Chechnya.

Capitalist counterrevolution has brought with it a recrudescence of all the old regional and interimperialist rivalries, and ushered in new ones. While Germany is going along with the U.S. vendetta against Kuchma/Yanukovich, Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder has demonstratively maintained friendly relations with Putin throughout the confrontation. Meanwhile, Poland—this time acting as a lackey of U.S., not French, imperialism—has moved aggressively to reassert its historic interests in Ukraine. Ex-Stalinist president Aleksander Kwasniewski and former Solidarność leader Lech Walesa both visited Kiev, the former as a "mediator" blessed by Bush and the latter in open solidarity with the "Orange Revolution." The Polish Sejm (parliament), with many parliamentarians ostentatiously dressed in orange, passed a resolution demanding that the Kiev regime "respect free elections," while rallies supporting Yushchenko have been staged throughout the country, in at least one case raising the demand, "Ukraine Without Putin."

Progress Publishers

Wide World

Red Army units entering Kiev, 1919. Christian Rakovsky, head of the Ukrainian Soviet government from 1919-23, with Leon Trotsky in 1927.

For New October Revolutions!

The Bolshevik Revolution transformed what Lenin called the tsarist "prison house of peoples" into a multinational federation. What made this possible was the Bolsheviks' internationalist program, which asserted full and equal national rights for all peoples—including the right of national independence—in order to secure the fullest unity of the workers of all nationalities. From 1919 to 1923, the head of the Ukrainian Soviet government was Christian Rakovsky, the outstanding Romanian revolutionary socialist and Bolshevik leader, who later became Trotsky's key ally in the International Left Opposition.

Keenly sensitive to any hint of anti-Ukrainian prejudices among the largely Russian or Russified Bolsheviks in the Ukraine, Lenin and Trotsky insisted that all Communist administrators working there had to speak Ukrainian. Rakovsky continued this tradition. In line with Lenin's express concerns, Rakovsky was singularly outspoken at the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923 in denouncing the chauvinist treatment by Stalin and his allies of the Georgian Communists, an early sign of the nationalist bureaucracy consolidating around Stalin's leadership. Placing the struggle against Russian chauvinism firmly in the context of the program of world socialist revolution, Rakovsky declared: "If we are to become the centre of the struggle of the oppressed nationalities outside the boundaries of the USSR, we must internally, within the boundaries of the USSR, make a correct decision on the national question" (Christian Rakovsky, *Selected Writings on Opposition in the USSR 1923-30* [1980]).

The kind of ethnic and regional hostilities that are coming to the fore today can only be overcome through proletarian class struggle. This was palpable in the 1993 Donbass miners strike, the first major workers struggle in the former Soviet Union after the capitalist counterrevolution. A red banner at one of the strike demonstrations proclaimed: "Nationalism Shall Not Pass!" The strike soon spread from the Donbass coal fields to the cities and on to the western Ukraine, including cities near the Polish border. But the union leadership, working closely with the mine directors, derailed the struggle into a demand for regional "self-administration" in the east, whereby the mine directors would get regional autonomy in order to exercise control over profits.

In a 1996 article titled "Why Marxists Do Not Raise the Call 'Restore the Soviet Union'" (*WV* No. 639, 16 February 1996), we wrote: "What will the interpenetrated and heavily assimilated Eastern Ukraine population want to do in the aftermath of proletarian revolution—go with Russia, the Western Ukraine, a socialist federation linking them, or some other variant?" The outcome of this question depends heavily on whether the next wave of revolutionary ferment is generated, for example, from Warsaw or Berlin in the west or Moscow in the east—or Central Asia. One thing is certain: the only way out of the immiseration and fratricide unleashed by capitalist counterrevolution lies in socialist revolution to sweep away all the new capitalist ruling classes and return to the Bolshevik internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky. ■

AIDS...

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to speak, the chanting and *toyi toying* began again: "The Black Elite is causing this suffering." Shilowa's speech was an insult and youth in the back of the hall started making placards: "African potato, olive oil, she must taste it first" and "Phansi nge Beet Root" [Down with beet root]. Another read "If you want votes go to the nearest cemetery." TAC members roamed the hall collecting the offending placards.

The TAC's whole strategy exemplifies the limits of keeping the struggle for decent health care and living conditions within the confines of capitalism, especially when the vast majority of the world's population lives in poverty. Politically loyal to the ANC, their "watchdog" strategy of pressuring the regime has turned them into political cops suppressing the immense and justifiable rage against the government. Disenchanted TAC activists must break with single-issue activism and *with the ANC* and struggle against the capitalist profit system of exploitation, poverty and war.

A "Left" Opponent of Revolutionary Marxism

Posturing to the left of the ANC/SACP is the Democratic Socialist Movement (DSM), affiliated with the Committee for a Workers International of Peter Taaffe. The DSM has opposed Mbeki's HIV/AIDS denial and criticised the TAC for, among other things, defending the profits of drug companies. They say "the battle against AIDS cannot be won in the Courts, but in the struggle against capitalism itself" (*Izwi Labasebenzi*, June 2002). They criticise TAC leader Zackie Achmat's public posture as a "loyal ANC member bewildered by the apparently inexplicable position of his leader, Mbeki...." This might lead some to give credence to the DSM as bona fide defenders of the downtrodden. Nothing could be further from the truth. For a group that spent some 20 years (!) inside the ANC as the so-called Marxist Workers Tendency (MWT), to attack Achmat for his slavish loyalty to the same ANC takes some truly self-serving memory loss. Ignoring the clear print of the Freedom Charter, they repeatedly state the ANC's capitalist programme began in 1996 with the imposition of GEAR. But the ANC did not just recently go bad. It has always been explicitly capitalist. The MWT stayed inside the ANC when it negotiated the historic betrayal of the African masses in 1994. They were in the ANC when the Mandela government unleashed repression against the national nurses strike and fired 6,000 in the Eastern Cape in 1995. Their current opposition to the ANC, including on HIV/AIDS, does not diminish the responsibility they bear for the crimes of the ANC, which *they helped put into power*.

Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

South Africa is an example of what Marxists call combined and uneven development. The technologies to build nuclear reactors and chronic outbreaks of cholera have an uneasy coexistence. On the streets of Durban, purveyors of *muthi* (traditional medicines) offering mystery powders and ground bones as cures for the ravages of AIDS are found side by side with the advanced technology necessary to operate one of the world's most active industrial ports. Modern industrial and mining complexes were built through the superexploitation of the black toilers by the white capitalist class. The privileged white minority enjoys living standards comparable to the wealthiest enclaves in North America and West Europe, including having access to the best medical care money can buy. But a powerful working class exists that will be the gravedigger of the neo-apartheid social order.

In South Africa, with its significant economic development in the crucial urban centres and its *relatively* advanced medical care, ARVs could be distributed on a massive scale. Less developed Botswana is distributing ARVs free to 17,400 people, which is, however, only a fraction of its 260,000-strong HIV-positive population (the government estimates that 100,000 people are in immediate need of ARVs). But even the most rational and humane policy under neo-apartheid capitalism may well not be enough to save the lives of millions of people in this country, including entire sections of the South African proletariat. Poverty, homophobia, women's oppression and "traditional institutions" will continue to plague any approach to this disease, strongly affecting who is treated. The availability of drugs and the rational utilisation of technology are hamstrung by private medical services and profiteering pharmaceutical companies. In rural areas, the absence of infrastructure, transport and refrigeration presents additional obstacles to be overcome.

South Africa has the most powerful proletariat on the continent. There are in its ranks many adherents of a socialist vision of society. This proletariat has not been defeated in battle, although its liberation was "negotiated" away at least temporarily. The powerful strikes against privatisation over the past three years have not raised the basic call for *free ARVs for everybody now!* This would destabilise the ANC and South Africa in a profound way, so deeply is the country fractured by this crisis.

Massive unemployment and land hunger, the displacement of the African population in townships, the migrant labour system with its single-sex hostels—these are the core characteristics of neo-apartheid capitalism *today*. If it is to fight for its own liberation against capitalist exploitation, the South African working class must lead the battle against the obstruction of the Alliance on AIDS. It must oppose the brutal oppression of women, immigrants and the rural poor. It must take up the cause of the millions who languish in the country's impoverished shantytowns.

Spartacist South Africa is dedicated to the task of building a revolutionary internationalist vanguard party as the critical step in unchaining the power of the South African proletariat. It will struggle against every manifestation of social oppression and police tyranny. It will be, in Lenin's words, a "tribune of the people." The South African working class must be an instrument of its own emancipation and all the oppressed by sweeping away capitalism in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the scourge of HIV/AIDS cannot be eliminated within the colonial-derived boundaries of the South African state. The survival of socialist revolution on the subcontinent requires its international extension to the metropolitan bastions of imperialism in the West and Japan. This is the task to which the International Communist League is dedicated. Then and only then will the necessary social resources and the most advanced medical and scientific techniques be employed in the service of all humanity to truly tackle the plague of HIV/AIDS. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

2004 SUBJECT INDEX

Issue No. 817 (9 January) through No. 838 (10 December)

GUIDE TO THE SUBJECT INDEX

- This subject index covers issues of *Workers Vanguard* published during 2004, from issue No. 817 (9 January) through the end-of-the-year issue No. 838 (10 December). During this time, *WV* was published biweekly, except skipping three alternate issues in June, July and August, and skipping the last issue in December.
- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed chronologically with two exceptions: all entries comprising a series are listed together immediately following the first entry of the series; corrections immediately follow the relevant entry. An asterisk (*) after the page location of an entry indicates that a correction follows.
- Entries are listed under subject heads. In some cases, subject heads are broken down into subcategories. These subcategories are listed immediately after the initial subject head and preceded by a dot (•). The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:

  Fight Sinister Government "Terrorism" Smear, #836, 12 Nov. (16, 13)

  means the headline of the article, issue No. 836, dated 12 November 2004, beginning on page 16 and continuing on page 13.
- No entry is listed twice; refer to cross references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross references are of two types: those following the word "see" deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words "see also" are related articles. Subject heads in cross references are separated by a semicolon, while subcategories of subject heads are separated by a comma. Thus:

  Sex Witchhunt—See **Black Question; Britain; Civil Liberties: General, Cases; U.S.: General**. See also **Mexico**.

  means that articles about the anti-sex witchhunt can be found by going to the subject heads **BLACK QUESTION** and **BRITAIN**; by going to the subject head **CIVIL LIBERTIES** and looking under the subcategories **General** and **Cases**, and by going to the subject head **UNITED STATES** and looking under the subcategory **General**. Related articles can be found by going to the subject head **MEXICO**.
- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately unless the article is primarily about the given person. Foreign political organizations are generally listed under appropriate countries, while U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Articles relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings and not normally under any other subject heading. Articles which deal centrally with U.S. foreign policy will be found under **U.S.: International Relations**, except those articles that refer to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, which will be found under **IRAQ: U.S. War and Occupation**. Articles dealing with domestic aspects of the "War on Terror" are located under **CIVIL LIBERTIES: General**; those dealing particularly with attacks on immigrants will be found under **IMMIGRATION**.
- Articles on protests that take place on a campus will generally be found under the subject of the protest. Protests on miscellaneous subjects will be found under **CAMPUS PROTESTS**. Articles that concern repression on campus by the administration or attempts by government or right-wing forces to repress the political views of students and faculty will be found under **CAMPUS REPRESSION**.
- The periodic columns by death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal are listed under the subject heading **ABU-JAMAL** in the subcategory **Message from Death Row**; articles on his case and the campaign to free him are in the subcategory **Defense Campaign**.
- Articles under the *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* (CSDN) masthead are by the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian, legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League.
- Abbreviations used in entries are:
  - C: Correction
  - CSDN: *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* article
  - E: Editorial Note
  - L: Letter
  - R: Review
  - S: Series
  - W&R: *Women and Revolution* article
  - YSp: *Young Spartacus* article

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  - Part 2, #831, 3 Sept. (8, 9, 10)
- Bill Cosby Rants Against Ghetto Poor: The Crisis of Black Leadership (by Don Cane), #832, 17 Sept. (12, 7, 8)*
- Ta-Nehisi Coates (L) (correction to "Bill Cosby Rants..."), #833, 1 Oct. (3)
- Bill Cosby Rants... (C), #838, 10 Dec. (3)
- Black Disenfranchisement and American "Democracy", #833, 1 Oct. (12, 11)
- Georgia State University: Black Student Alliance Suspended for Protesting Racist Frat (YSp), #833, 1 Oct. (7)

Bl(A)ck Tea Society—See **Anarchism; Democratic and Republican National Conventions.**

Boston—See **Anarchism; Democratic and Republican National Conventions; Police.**

BRAZIL—And see **Internationalist Group.**

- Lula's Popular Front Turns Screws on Workers, #818, 23 Jan. (1, 8, 9, 10)

BRITAIN—And see **"Globalization" Protests; Woman Question.**

- On March 20 London Protest (L), #827, 28 May (2)
- Down With Anti-Sex Witchhunt in Britain! (*Workers Hammer*), #827, 28 May (10)

Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE, formerly INS)—See **Immigration.** See also **Civil Liberties: Cases.**

Busing—See **Black Question.**

CAMPUS PROTESTS—And see **Black Question; Iraq: Antiwar Protests.** See also **Germany.**

- SYC Leads Protest at CCSF: Military Recruiters Off Campus! (YSp), #820, 20 Feb. (2)
- SYC Protests Racist Ideologue Malkin at UC Berkeley (YSp), #832, 17 Sept. (7)
- Chicago: High School Students Drive Military Recruiters Off Campus (YSp), #835, 29 Oct. (5)

CAMPUS REPRESSION—And see **Canada; Civil Liberties: General; Democratic and Republican National Conventions; Iraq: Antiwar Protests; Police.**

- Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad! Down With Zionist Witchhunt on Campus! (YSp), #837, 26 Nov. (12, 8)
- Defend Columbia Professor Joseph Massad! (YSp), #838, 10 Dec. (5)

CAMPUS WORKERS

- Victory to Columbia Graduate Student Employees Strike! (YSp), #825, 30 Apr. (12, 9)
- Columbia Graduate Students Battle Union-Busting Administration (YSp), #826, 14 May (3, 7)
- Columbia: Union Tops Betray, Halt Strike at Behest of Democrats (YSp), #827, 28 May (7)

CANADA—And see **Campus Repression; International Bolshevik Tendency.**

- Auto Workers "Hot Cargo" in Support of Rail Strike, #821, 5 Mar. (10)

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